

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_216186

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

216186

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No. 923-1/586P

Accession No. 30866

Author Stitt George.

Title Prince of Arabia

This book should be returned on or before the date last marked below.

For a period of 700 years the Emirate of Mecca was held by the direct descendants of the Prophet Mohammed and handed down in unbroken succession. To this line belonged the Emir Shereef Ali Haider. In the early nineteenth century, however, the sturdy independence of these Emirs became a source of embarrassment to the Turkish Government, who introduced another branch of Shereefs as rivals to the ruling clan. This enabled the Sultan to threaten one or the other with deposition if they did not carry out a policy in accordance with his wishes. To this junior branch of Shereefs belonged Hussein of the Hedjaz who raised the standard of rebellion under the inspiration of T. E. Lawrence.

The story of Ali Haider begins about 1865 when his grandfather had been deposed for the first time in favour of the rival family. It ends in 1935. Against the background of intrigue and the colourful but sinister court of Abdul Hamid and his successors it follows a fascinating course. Marriage with a British lady helped to make him suspect in the eyes of authority, and Hussein is appointed to the Emirate which Ali Haider regarded as his birthright. Only when the former rebelled in 1916 did the Turks recognise Ali Haider, who proceeded to Medina in a vain effort to establish Arab unity. There followed years of disillusion and disappointment during which he was proposed for the thrones of Iraq, Syria and the Hedjaz, and even suggested as a possible Caliph when the Turkish Nationalists banished the ruling family from Turkey.

The tale is full of human interest and drama. To anyone interested in the Middle East it provides a background to events of the present century, and sheds a new light both on the growth of Arab Nationalism and the circumstances surrounding the Revolt in the Desert of 1916.

The pike head used for the jacket design is from the staff to Ali Haider's standard. It signifies: "There is no God, but God; and Mohammed is His Prophet."

A PRINCE OF ARABIA



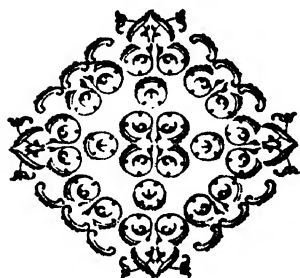
His Highness the Shereef Ali Haider [1919]
Emir of Mecca

[Frontispiece]

A PRINCE OF ARABIA

THE EMIR SHEREEF
ALI HAIDER

BY GEORGE STITT
Commander R.N. (retired)



GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
Ruskin House, 40, Museum Street
London, W.C.1.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1948

*This book is copyright
No portion of it may be reproduced by
any process without written permission
Inquiries should be addressed
to the publisher*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
in 12 point Baskerville type
BY BRADFORD & DICKENS, LONDON, W.C. 1

PREFACE

THE following biography of his late Highness, the Shereef Ali Haider, who was appointed to the Emirate of Mecca by the Turks when Hussein raised the standard of revolt in 1916, has been compiled largely from his diaries which have been translated and sent to me by his widow, Princess Fatma, who, before her marriage, was an English girl—daughter of a Colonel Dunn. These translations I have rewritten and edited and, to a certain extent, embellished without in any way altering the facts. Whenever possible I have endeavoured to present the story of the Shereef's life through his own eyes, using his simple, straightforward style to describe it. When I have expressed my own views I have done so with diffidence, and with the idea of giving as clear a picture as possible of an honest man struggling for what he believed to be his rights amidst the welter of political ambition and personal greed.

I first met the Shereef in Constantinople in 1919 and maintained, I might almost say, intimate touch with him for the next sixteen years until his death.

It was impossible not to be impressed by his kindly, powerful personality. Here, indeed, I felt, was a really good man, and everything I have learnt about him since has served to strengthen that early conviction.

In some respects the story of his life may appear disappointing as he seemed to miss great opportunities. But it would be a mistake to ascribe this to any weakness of character. On the contrary, he set himself a fixed ideal from which no intrigue or shattering disappointment would move him. He was a man who sincerely and honestly tried to carry out the instructions in the Koran and to follow God's precepts. He had the bent of a saint. He would weigh a suggested course of action and decide whether it did or did not accord with God's ruling, and whether it was contrary to the dictates of his own conscience. Perhaps that is why, to this day, even a republican Turk refers to him with deference and admiration.

"He was not as other men" is a remark that has been made about him by men in all walks of life—Ambassadors, Princes, officers and slaves.

Though he was the simplest of men, yet he had great pride, a sureness of himself and his position in the world. He was a Shereef—to

A Prince of Arabia

him there was no higher position—so that to seek a kingdom, acquire position and honours appeared a vulgar action. They should come to him: he should not seek them. In western eyes this may appear weak and foolish, but “God helps those who help themselves” was never a tenet of the Moslem religion and has possibly prevented many a devout and sincere Mohammedan from achieving distinction.

The Shereef Ali Haider was also a man of great reserve, and this characteristic is unfortunately reflected in his diary. It naturally arose from the years of repression he endured as a child and from the constant watch, when he grew up, kept on his words and actions by the minions of Sultan Abdul Hamid, whose suspicious nature made free expression impossible and created a terror as bad as that of any Gestapo.

To the average reader the name of the Shereef, Ali Haider, may be unknown, but only a combination of unfortunate circumstances prevented his name from being numbered among the great personalities of the Middle East. As a psychological study therefore, in addition to any historic value it may hold, I venture to hope the story will be of interest.

To the books mentioned in the bibliography I am indebted for the compilation of much of the introduction, and they have also assisted me in the text, but I believe that the story of the rise to power of the house of Devi-Aoun, and the influence exerted on Mohammed Ali of Egypt by the Shereefa Muzeymeh has never yet been published. My authority is a gentleman of the Shereefian family to whom such knowledge has been handed down in the traditional manner of the desert.

G.M.S.S.

STATEMENT BY HER HIGHNESS THE
PRINCESS FATMA

I, FATMA HAIDER, widow of H.H. the late Emir of Mecca Shereef Ali Haider, grandson of H.H. the Grand Shereef of Mecca, Abdul Muttalib, have given from my husband's diary, begun and kept at my instigation, a translation.

The diary is written in Turkish, though the Prince was a great Arab scholar. My daughter, Shereefa Sfyneh, reads it to me as I write it in English, my Turkish not being strong enough to read it. I send this translation to our friend George Stitt, asking him to arrange it at his discretion, with any additions he thinks fit to present a clear situation to form a background to this Biography.

I may add that as in his life my husband hurt no one, friend or enemy, so now in publishing this record there is no intention of hurting any one. A man's life is influenced by his surroundings, and the intrigues and events which happened before and after his birth are beyond his control. A family whose direct ancestors trace, and not merely trace, but join the main part of the history of a country, an Empire, and form a large part of the religious life of millions during a thousand years and more must have a remarkable background.

The Arab nation has made history, and is making, and will make, the history of the Near East.

Religion may now play a lesser part and nationalism a greater, but this life, this branch to which he belonged of the greatest family of all time, naturally had members of less or greater importance. There were struggles and strife among themselves, but they were the core of the whole of their world centred in the Holy City.

The first World War naturally changed vitally the outer circumstances of his family, which were shaken in his special branch by the changes after the Napoleonic Wars.

If the Prince lost all earthly things he retained honour and faith.

FATMA HAIDER

Le Phare, Raz Beirut, Syria

CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
PREFACE	5
<i>Statement by Her Highness the Princess Fatma</i>	7
INTRODUCTION <i>The Emirate of Mecca</i>	15
I. 1866—1885	
<i>The Grand Sherceef Abdul Muttalib in Stamboul. Birth and early life of Ali Haider. A visit to Mecca. Schooldays. The Court of Abdul Hamid. The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib.</i>	
1. Birth and Boyhood	37
2. A Visit to Mecca	49
3. Schooldays	55
4. The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib	65
II. 1885—1909	
<i>Intrigues for the Emirate of Mecca. Ali Haider's early Manhood. Marriage. The Struggle for Mecca. The Turkish Revolution and Deposition of Abdul Hamid. Travels in Egypt and Asia Minor.</i>	
5. Early Manhood	83
6. The Turkish Revolution	92
III. 1909—1912	
<i>Disillusion follows Revolution. War with Italy. The Shereef visits Medina. Outbreak of First Balkan War.</i>	
7. Pilgrimage to Medina	113
8. The Balkan War	123

A Prince of Arabia

page

IV. 1912-1916

*The End of the Balkan Wars. Intrigues in the Hedjaz.
Outbreak of the First World War.*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 9. End of the Balkan Wars | 133 |
| 10. Outbreak of the First World War | 141 |

V. 1916-1918

*The Arab Revolt. Ali Haider obtains his Birthright as
Emir of Mecca. The Defence of Medina.*

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 11. Emir of Mecca | 155 |
| 12. The Defence of Medina | 169 |

VI. 1918

*Return to Stamboul. The Armistice brings disillusion.
Ali Haider struggles to retain his rights.*

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| 13. Armistice | 185 |
| 14. The Struggle in Stamboul | 195 |

VII. 1919-1921

*The Treaty of Sévres and the birth of a New Turkey.
Trouble in Syria. The Rulership of Mesopotamia.
Ali Haider as a claimant to the Throne.*

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| 15. The New Turkey | 209 |
| 16. The Mesopotamian Claim | 220 |

VIII. 1921-1923

*Arabia abandoned in the Resurrection of Turkey. The
Sultan withdraws recognition of Ali Haider as Emir
of Mecca. The Treaty of Lausanne. The Kemalists
abolish the Sultanate.*

A Prince of Arabia

	<i>page</i>
17. The Sultan Withdraws Recognition	239
18. The Abolition of the Sultanate	247

IX. 1923-1926

The Abolition of the Caliphate. The Wahhabi conquest of the Hedjaz. Ali Haider is proposed for the Emirate of Mecca.

19. The Caliph leaves Turkey	263
20. Ibn Saoud and the Hedjaz	275

X. 1926-1935

*Ali Haider's last journey to Arabia and final dis-
appointment. Last days in Syria.*

21. Journey to Syria	289
22. The End	298

APPENDICES

1. <i>The House of the Prophet Mohammed</i>	308
2. <i>The House of Devi-Zeyd</i>	309
3. <i>The House of Devi-Aoun</i>	310
4. <i>Contemporary Sultans of the House of Osman</i>	311
5. <i>The Recommendation of the Shereef Ali Haider to the Moslem World by the Caliph Abdul Mejid</i>	312

BIBLIOGRAPHY	314
--------------	-----

ILLUSTRATIONS

His Highness the Shereef Ali Haider (1919)	
Emir of Mecca	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
The Shereef Ali Haider. Aged 7	48
Shereef Ali Jabir, Father of Ali Haider	64
Miss Isobel Dunn (afterwards the Princess Fatma) at the time of her marriage to the Shereef Ali Haider	96
H.H. Shereef Abdul Mejid (Eldest son of Ali Haider) First Minister for Transjordan at Court of S. James 1947	112
Medina, with fountain erected by the Shereef Ali Haider in centre	128
H.H. Shereef Mohiddin (Second son of Ali Haider)	144
H.E. Talaat Pasha	145
His Highness the Emir Shereef Ali Haider, 1916	160
The arrival of Ali Haider in Medina, 1916 Led by Bedouin and regular troops the Emir advances behind a large standard (at the back of the picture)	161
Fakhri Pasha. Commander and Governor of Medina, 1916-1919	176
Medina, 1916. The Emir Shereef Ali Haider leaving the Mosque after a Friday service	177
Outside Medina 1916. The Emir, Shereef Ali Haider goes for a drive	192
The Return of the Emir, Shereef Ali Haider, to Stamboul, 1918	193
Chumlijah, 1919	208
H.H. Shereef Mohammed Emin (Third son of Ali Haider)	240
Her Highness, the Princess Fatma, 1935	272
The last days of the Emir. Ali Haider, Beirut, 1934	304



INTRODUCTION

THE EMIRATE OF MECCA

UNTIL the advent of the first World War, when the exploits of T. E. Lawrence captured the imagination, little was known in Europe of the special institution, known as the Shereefate of Mecca, either in its religious aspect, or in its political relationship with the Turkish government.

Throughout the Moslem world the Shereef of Mecca commanded the greatest respect, and the venerable position of this descendant of the prophet as custodian of the Holy Places invested him with a sanctity as great as that of any Pope of Rome. Once a year, from every corner of the world, by sea from Java and from India, on foot from the very heart of Africa, and across the burning deserts from Persia, Iraq and Afghanistan, thousands of devout pilgrims would come to worship and adore at the Holy Kaaba. Men of every type and colour, rich and poor, but all united in the service of their Faith, poured into the Hedjaz to experience the spiritual exultation of the Haj, to kiss the sacred Stone and obtain the blessing of the Shereef. A royal family, indeed, whose lineage could be traced back a thousand years and more! No wonder that the Turks, later striving for supremacy, feared the power of the Grand Shereef of Mecca. Though they paid no obeisance to the representative of another King, yet the Sultans would kiss the hands and knees of the Emir, and bend low before him whom they longed, but feared, to crush.

During the period of the first four Caliphs of Islam, who resided at Medina, the Government of the Hedjaz was directly vested in the Defender of the Faithful; and later, under the Abbaside Caliphs of Baghdad, this sacred province maintained a close connexion with the central authority. It so remained until 1037, when the power of the Caliphs had grown weak, due to corrupt living, and the Defender of the Faithful was no more than a puppet in the hands of the Pretorian Turks. At this time the head of the Shereefian family was Mohammed el Alaoui of the Koreish to which tribe the Prophet had himself belonged. He commanded considerable power in the Hedjaz where he had helped to maintain as settled a Government as the conditions of the time permitted, and now realized the weak and ineffective power of the Caliph. He therefore declared the Hedjaz an independent state.

For a time the Emirate of Mecca was retained in the hands of the

A Prince of Arabia

younger sons of Mohammed el Alaoui, but in 1174 it definitely passed to the family of his eldest son, Abdullah, whose descendants reigned for the next seven centuries. The first, and one of the greatest Emirs of this line was Shereef Katada, who then not only controlled the Hedjaz, but also the Asir and part of the Yemen. A story is recorded that the Abbaside family in Iraq began to fear the power of the Shereef and his influence which extended across the great deserts of Arabia. The Caliph, in fact, became so alarmed for his title that he seriously considered the equipment of an army to march into the Hedjaz, subdue the country and incorporate it into his own small Empire. His Vizier, however, dissuaded him from such a dangerous course which he felt could only end in disaster, and he advised his master that his best interests lay in the maintenance of peace with Katada. In order to further this peace the Vizier undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca, during the course of which he invited the Grand Shereef to pay a visit to Baghdad as guest of the Caliph. Katada accepted and, with a strong force, crossed the desert to the borders of Iraq up to which his influence extended. Here he met a gorgeous deputation from the Caliph to welcome him in state with costly presents, among which were two chained lions. When Shereef Katada saw the lions he was indignant and said in Arab poetry of which he was a master: "No place have I among men who chain the king of beasts." So he turned his head to the West and sent the Vizier to the Caliph, saying: "If you wish for war, follow me now into the desert."

For the next four centuries the influence of the Shereefs was maintained, and no serious challenge to their position was encountered. During this period the Ottoman Empire rose to its height and by 1517 the Turkish Sultan, Selim I, had extended his conquest over a vast area stretching from the Euphrates on the one hand to the Nile on the other and had compelled the last of the Abbasides, held prisoner in Cairo, to yield him the title of Caliph. Shereef Bereket II was then Emir of Mecca, and he sent his son, Abu Numay, to meet the Turkish Sultan in Cairo and deliver to him, for safe keeping, the holy relics of the Prophet which had hitherto been kept at Mecca. (See separate list, p. 32.)

Up to this moment the Shereefs of Mecca had never recognized the title of Caliph since the death of Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet and fourth Caliph of Islam. Now, however, the power and might of the Turkish conqueror so impressed the Shereef that he was willing to regard him as the Champion of Islam and to accord him the title which he had wrested from the Abbaside dynasty. The holy relics

The Emirate of Mecca

were delivered to Selim more as loans than as actual gifts and, on return to Constantinople, the Sultan had a special palace built for their reception, where they were kept until republican Turkey moved them to Ankara after the first World War. To the Grand Shereef these relics were merely sentimental objects of respect, and he would doubtless have been horrified at the political capital that later Sultans were to make out of their possession.

The young Shereef Abu Numay was received by Sultan Selim with great pomp and circumstance. He was a youth of remarkable intelligence and profound learning, and his striking presence caused a deep impression. The Sultan showed him great respect, and later asked his Vizier what he thought of the Shereef. "In my opinion there is more pride, greatness and nobility in his face than there should be," replied the Grand Vizier.

"Why not?" said the Sultan. "Why shouldn't the principal descendant of the Prophet feel his greatness before such men as you and me who are his slaves?"

As a result of this meeting with Selim I, the annual gifts presented both by Egypt, and the Ottoman Sultans to the Harem Shereef, were considerably increased and the Emir enriched thereby. Villages were offered as *Wakf*, and also property in Stamboul, Syria and elsewhere was dedicated to the same purpose. In accordance with the *Sheriat*, or Sacred Law, the Emir could claim one fifth of such gifts; so this diplomatic mission to Sultan Selim proved beneficial to the Grand Shereef and his successors.

In spite of his recognition as Caliph, the Sultan did not dare to usurp any of the special privileges of the Shereef of Mecca, nor to assume sovereignty over the Holy Places. He only requested the Shereef to mention his name in public prayers on Fridays, to which act of platonic submission no objection was raised. Thence, until 1813, the Shereefs of Mecca maintained their independence, and the Porte paid scanty attention to matters connected with the Hedjaz. In fact, the Turkish position was merely nominal, and the executive government of the Holy Cities was vested almost entirely in the Grand Shereef. The order of succession of the Shereefs normally passed from father to son, in accordance with the electoral principle, employed ever since the time of the Prophet. But, with the large families they brought up, it was necessary for each Emir to nominate his successor from among his sons, and this nomination would generally be accepted by the remainder of the family. No great ceremony was observed; the court of the Shereef was small and almost entirely devoid of pomp. His title was neither Sultan nor

A Prince of Arabia

Sultan Shereef, and his subjects addressed him as *Saidna* (Our Lord).

"When the Shereef rides out," wrote Burkhardt, "he carries in his hand a short slender stick called *Metrek*, such as the Bedouins sometimes use in driving their camels; a horseman, who rides close by him, carries in his hand an umbrella, or canopy, of Chinese design adorned with silk tassels which he holds over the Shereef's head when the sun incommodes him. This is the only sign of royalty by which the Shereef is distinguished when he appears in public; and even this is not used when he walks in the street."

Abu Numay is considered the second greatest Shereef after Katada, and he reigned in Mecca for over 60 years, during which he established many laws both for his own family and for the tribes under his control; laws which are still maintained up to the present day. He regulated the grazing places for the Bedouin, made laws for the settlement of their disputes and their relationship with the Shereefs. The lives of the Shereefs were often in danger and many were killed both in wars and in private disputes. In order, therefore, to prevent the family of Shereefs from being decimated, and to maintain their prestige, he enacted a law whereby four lives were to be forfeited for the murder of any Shereef. The severity of this penalty restrained the hand of many a man who harboured a personal grudge against any member of the Shereefian family. It was the custom then, and for many years to come, for the male children of a Shereef to spend their early years living amongst the Bedouin, sharing their hardships and exposed to all the dangers of the desert.

To furnish an historical record of each Grand Shereef is a difficult task since so much has been drawn from verbal communications, and authorities therefore differ in many details. It would appear, however, that from 1750-70 Musaad occupied the Emirate and, at his death, a cousin, Hussein, was raised by his own party to the Government of the country. Hussein continued to rule for four years when he was slain in war with Serour, son of Musaad, who thereupon assumed the position his father formerly had held. Numerous acts are related of Serour which reflect honour on his love of equity and his sagacity. He reigned until 1785 or '86 and, when he died, it is recorded that the whole population of Mecca followed his remains to the grave.

During the reign of Serour, the Harb tribe, who have always been notorious for their rebellious and undisciplined spirit, rose in revolt and became a constant source of trouble to the Grand Shereef. Time and again he organized expeditions to curb their insubordination until, at length, his patience exhausted, he announced that if they

The Emirate of Mecca

gave him any more trouble, he would appoint a black woman to control and govern them. Again they rose and, when he had subdued their insurrection, he gave the governorship of their tribe into the hands of a black female slave. He invested her with tremendous power which she used to rule the tribe with a rod of iron. Serour also built the great Gehat Palace, part of which is now used by Ibn Saoud as the 'Hotel de la Mecque' for visitors to Mecca.

After the death of Serour, Abdul Mu'in, one of his brothers, succeeded for a few days. Then a younger brother, Ghalib, by superior skill and by the great popularity he had acquired, dispossessed Abdul Mu'in, who then retired and lived in the Court of Abdul Aziz, the Emir of Nejd. Ghalib at length acquired a firmer authority over the Hedjaz than any of his predecessors had possessed, but, during his wars with the Wahhabis, the younger sons of Serour attempted to wrest the government from their uncle, but without success.

From the middle of the eighteenth century until the present day the history of Mecca has been associated with that powerful movement for the reformation of Islam known as Wahhabi. From the time when its founder, Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahab, obtained the support of the family of Saoud, this movement has from time to time spread in waves of violent puritanical fanaticism and threatened even the rule of Western nations on the borders of Arabia. The first occasion on which adherents of this creed entered Mecca was in 1770 when a party of Wahhabis made a pilgrimage to the Holy City and were welcomed and nobly entertained by the Grand Shereef Hussein, at whose request they explained the principles of the new movement which had originated in Nejd.

It is not intended here to discuss the tenets of Wahhabism, and it will be sufficient to say that, at the time of these conversations, it is reported that the ecclesiastics of Mecca received the new creed with every appearance of cordiality. As time went on, however, it was soon apparent that these beliefs from the desert could not be reconciled with those that supported the Shereefate. The strong Wahhabi power, led by men of ambition and proselytizing zeal, which now grew in Central Arabia, soon menaced the existence of the Hedjaz as a separate political entity. In fact, a Danish Mission under Carsten Niebuhr, landed at Jeddah in 1762, and reported that the Wahhabi Emir was actually being talked of as a possible ruler of all Arabia. The Meccan ecclesiastics, therefore, declared that the preaching of the Wahhabis was inconsistent with all the principles and practices of the Grand Shereef and his ancestors, and started a campaign for the uprooting of the Wahhabi heresy.

A Prince of Arabia

In 1790-1 occurred the first serious encounter between the Wahhabis and the Shereef of Mecca. At first the forces of Ghalib met with considerable success, but he advanced too far into the deserts of Nejd where his position became precarious and he was forced to retreat. The initiative then passed to the Wahhabis, who lost no time in following up and harassing the retreating forces.

Repercussions of the Wahhabi movement gave birth to nationalist aspirations both in Syria and in the Yemen where the Arabs now desired to overthrow Turkish domination. Wahhabi proselytes overran Mesopotamia, and both Baghdad and Damascus had to pay heavily in order to secure the integrity of these cities. Local trouble with the Kurds, and a menace from Russia, prevented the Turks from stemming the spread of Wahhabi conquest and, although the Shah of Persia was alleged to have raised 100,000 men for this purpose, nothing effective was done to preserve the countries from Wahhabi invasion.

Between the years 1791-9 the Arab historian records a succession of raids and counter raids in the districts bordering the Hedjaz and Wahhabi territory. Occasionally Ghalib met with some success, but he was never able to penetrate far or to deliver any real blow to Wahhabi arms. The existence of this powerful foe in Central Arabia made it impossible for any pilgrim caravans to journey from Iraq to Mecca, and this was a serious blow to the economic prosperity of the Hedjaz. A temporary truce was arranged in 1799 which was celebrated by the passage of a great pilgrim caravan across Nejd under the personal escort of Saoud, but in 1801 the treaty arranged was flagrantly violated by a Wahhabi occupation of Hali on the Red Sea coast. The Shereef sent an envoy to demand satisfaction for this affront and injury, but the envoy turned Wahhabi and an immediate state of war was declared.

The Wahhabi forces were led by Saoud, son of Abdul Aziz, the great chief of Central Arabia, who sponsored the Wahhabi movement. Ghalib was weakened by family intrigue and countless jealousies; Saoud was strengthened by a fanaticism that bound his troops together in a common aspiration. Ghalib had attained the Emirate of Mecca by force since he had overthrown an effete and corrupt brother, Abdul Mu'in, who had succeeded his father; no such usurpation had marred the family of Saoud. But worse still for Ghalib. Abdul Mu'in had sought refuge at the Court of Abdul Aziz, and the Wahhabis could therefore say that they were invading the Hedjaz in order to restore the lawful ruler to the Emirate.

So the Wahhabi hordes swept into the Hedjaz and Saoud demanded

The Emirate of Mecca

that Ghalib abdicate in favour of his brother. "I will do no such thing," replied the Grand Shereef. "I am here at the wish of my people, and here I stay."

But the troops of Ghalib were not fired by the same spirit as those of Saoud, and they suffered a serious defeat in the neighbourhood of Taif when the Grand Shereef himself only just managed to escape capture.

This defeat was largely due to the treachery of a stepbrother, the Emir of Taif, to whom the Grand Shereef had given much property and financial assistance. When Ghalib first met the Wahhabi force in the neighbourhood of Taif he inflicted a crushing defeat and drove it back. Flushed with victory and loaded with loot, his followers began to disperse and, when the forces of Ghalib had been sufficiently weakened, his stepbrother, Osman, sent secret word to the Wahhabis to come and surround Taif, and then openly associated himself with their activities. Ghalib, caught in a trap, set fire to his palace and rushed his family to Mecca. His three hundred followers, left behind, were besieged for a month, at the end of which Saoud promised that no harm should happen to them if they surrendered. This they did, but Saoud was unable to restrain the fury of his own troops who now murdered the garrison to a man.

At this moment a large pilgrim caravan from Damascus, under the command of Abdullah Pasha, Governor of Damascus, was approaching Taif. When within three days' journey of its destination the progress of the caravan was arrested by a group of Wahhabis, who demanded payment for the right of way. These demands were so exorbitant that Abdullah Pasha refused to consider them, brushed the raiding party aside and continued his march to Mecca. He realized, however, that there were large numbers of Wahhabis in and around the town, so he despatched a conciliatory message to the Emir Saoud, who replied granting a truce of three days for the performance of the pilgrimage rights, on the condition of the caravan's immediate departure thereafter.

Ghalib, who realized that his position was getting weaker and weaker, hoped that the arrival of a Turkish caravan, under the command of a Pasha who was the direct representative of the Ottoman Sultan, would prove of great assistance. So he met Abdullah Pasha and begged him to mediate between the Emir Saoud and himself. This Abdullah Pasha endeavoured to do, but the Wahhabi chief refused to admit his right of intercession, and made him understand that he was not expected to interfere in matters which were no concern of his. The Pasha thereupon considered it wiser not to insist,

A Prince of Arabia

and merely contented himself with the accomplishment of the pilgrimage in the shortest possible time.

On the departure of the caravan, Ghalib retired to Jeddah to seek the protection of its new fortifications and its Turkish garrison under the Wali, Sharif Pasha. Saoud thereupon entered Mecca without opposition in 1803 and, having installed Abdul Mu'in as Emir, proceeded to spoil the city in accordance with the principles of the Wahhabi faith. The Kaaba was stripped of its rich coverings, and the treasures of the great mosque were appropriated to the victors. Tombs were destroyed and other places of visitation were obliterated, while a number of ecclesiastics were executed. Saoud then marched on Jeddah which resisted his vigorous assaults on the walls until his army was decimated by plague. An attempt on Medina also failed, his troops became demoralized, and Saoud decided to abandon the Hedjaz, where an infuriated people rose and massacred the small garrison of two hundred which he had left in Mecca. Ghalib resumed his post and found as little difficulty in recovering Taif, Kunfidah and Hali as the Wahhabis had originally experienced in capturing them.

For a time there was a respite in this struggle with the Wahhabis, and the murder of their great and aged Emir, Abdul Aziz, in November 1803, strengthened the belief that the Wahhabi menace was over for ever. But this was by no means the case, for Saoud, already recognized as heir apparent, ascended the vacant throne and lost little time in showing that his reign would be one of intensive activity. He first consolidated his position in the East and then turned his attention seriously to the conquest of the Hedjaz, where he soon recovered the position he had formerly held and had lost so easily. First Yenbo and then Medina capitulated to his forces and, in the autumn of 1804, the Wahhabis advanced on Mecca for the second time. Ghalib resisted stoutly, but there was little chance of saving the State from the fanatical Wahhabis led by such an iron-willed leader as Saoud, and Mecca surrendered in February 1806. For a time the Shereefian regime was at an end, and Saoud, having set up a semblance of regular administration, offered the governorship of the city to his old enemy Ghalib. The tenets and practices of Wahhabism were rigorously enforced, and the Grand Shereef was merely a silent and powerless figurehead.

But the conquest of the Hedjaz was by no means the end of Saoud's military activities, which threatened more and more the existence of the Ottoman Empire. As the Wahhabi movement grew, so did that feeling of Arab national consciousness, which the Turks regarded as a

The Emirate of Mecca

very real menace, and Saoud realized that, sooner or later, the Turks would make a special effort to avenge the many humiliations they had suffered at his hands. So he sought to conciliate those who were not altogether sorry to see the Ottoman Empire in difficulties. By 1811 the Wahhabi Empire extended from Aleppo in the north to the Indian Ocean, and from the Persian Gulf and the Iraq frontier in the East to the Red Sea.

Previously the Ottoman yoke had rested loosely on the Northern borderlands, and the Turks regarded the Arabian menace more as a nuisance than as a danger. But now the Turkish Sultan Mahmoud became so alarmed that he charged his powerful viceroy in Egypt, Mohammed Ali—from whom the present King of Egypt is descended—to subdue and bring the Hedjaz within the orbit of the Ottoman Empire; thence to crush Wahhabism, and eradicate the national spirit it represented. The choice of Mohammed Ali to perform this task throws an interesting sidelight on the political mentality of the Sublime Porte.

In Egypt Mohammed Ali had built up for himself a position which could scarcely be differentiated from effective independence. His strength of character had led him, more than once, to defy his Imperial Master, and his ambition urged him to take for himself many of the possessions of the Sultan. He dreamt of a big Arab Empire and himself as elected Emperor of Arabia and Egypt. To engage him now in an enterprise of this nature might, it was thought, deflect his energies from the path of treason and, if he was defeated, his humiliation would be to the advantage of his Ottoman sovereign.

So in 1811 the first Egyptian troops landed in the Hedjaz, but the occupation of the Hedjaz was not as simple as Mohammed Ali had expected, since the climate and hardships involved proved a serious obstacle to his troops, who had been accustomed to a more pleasant existence on the banks of the Nile. Thus, it was not until two years later that he finally drove the last remnants of the Wahhabis out of the Hedjaz, and more or less compelled Ghalib to declare himself a vassal of the Sultan.

The doom of the Wahhabi Empire was now sealed. On 1st May 1814 Saoud died, and with him died the last hope of the permanence of his Empire, for his son, who succeeded him, was made of different calibre and allowed Wahhabism to fall into that slumber from which it was not to awake for another century. But it took another four years before the forces of Mohammed Ali finally crushed the last remnants of Wahhabism by the capture of Dar'iyah and the execution of the Emir, Abdullah, who had succeeded Saoud.

A Prince of Arabia

As conditions became more settled, so Mohammed Ali realized the extent of the power wielded by the Grand Shereef of Mecca. He became jealous, since this power of the Grand Shereef conflicted with his own ambition, and he was determined to destroy it. So he sent reports to the Sublime Porte insinuating that the Grand Shereef was a source of danger to the Turks. The Sultan Mahmoud was alarmed and began to fear both the great strength of Shereef Ghahib and also the growing power of Mohammed Ali. Suppose they formed an alliance! He evolved a plan, typical of oriental treachery, and sent secret instructions to each of them.

One day, when both the Grand Shereef and Mohammed Ali happened to be performing a religious ceremony at the Kaaba, they met face to face.

"Day by day our rivalry increases," said Mohammed Ali with an ingratiating smile. "And to what purpose? If we worked together our power could be immense. So let us be friends and now, in these sacred precincts, pledge fidelity and peace."

"Allah has decreed this unexpected meeting on holy ground," declared Ghalib devoutly. "So be it—henceforth we will co-operate."

To pledge this new alliance Mohammed Ali gave a great banquet to which Shereef Ghalib and his three eldest sons were invited as guests of honour. It was an occasion for the display of lavish and colourful hospitality. Though, at the special request of Mohammed Ali, the news of the banquet had been suppressed as far as possible, the Grand Shereef rode in state to the picturesque encampment of the Egyptians where he and his followers received a cordial welcome.

The tents on either side of the way leading to the panoplied residence of Mohammed Ali were opened wide and, in the entrance to each, stood men to conduct the followers of the Emir to the different places where they were to feast. Thus, on reaching the presence of Mohammed Ali, the Grand Shereef and his sons stood alone. The banquet was served and then, to Ghalib's amazement, they were suddenly surrounded, bound and made prisoners.

With indescribable contempt the Grand Shereef turned to Mohammed Ali and exclaimed: "After our oath at the Kaaba, is it thus that you betray me?"

"It was either your head or mine, Shereef. Here is my order." With a dramatic gesture Mohammed Ali produced secret instructions he had received from the Sultan to get the Grand Shereef in his power. For a moment Ghalib studied the communication in silence.

"I received a similar order from the Sultan to arrest and have you

The Emirate of Mecca

deported," he at length observed bitterly. "I could have betrayed your trust and done so, but I respected our pledge."

The treachery shown by Mohammed Ali was typical of the period, and the following conversation with him, recorded in the travels of Burkhardt, is of interest: "That the English were guided in their policy by laws of honour," he writes, "and a sense of the general good of Europe, he could not comprehend. 'A great king,' he exclaimed with much warmth, 'knows nothing but his sword and his purse; he draws one to fill the other: there is no honour among conquerors.' A frank avowal of the sentiments which guide even the most petty of the Turkish rulers."

The arrival of the Grand Shereef in Stamboul caused a profound stir among believers in the Turkish capital, who regarded the principal descendant of the Prophet with the utmost veneration. The whole population rose to meet him and fell at his feet seeking to kiss his robe or to obtain his blessing. The Sultan, fearing the outcry that would be caused if any harm happened to the Grand Shereef in the capital, announced, after a few days of receptions and play-acting, that the Emir would return to Mecca. But the ship in which he embarked had been given orders, instead, to proceed to Salonika where the Grand Shereef and his family were landed, all to be poisoned a short time later in the year 1816.*

The Shereef Ghalib was only forty-five when he met this untimely end, and had he lived, would undoubtedly have become a great power in Arabia. During his Emirate he had been able to exert a strong influence over the people of the Hedjaz and, in spite of the vicissitudes he suffered at the hands of the Wahhabis, he never lost sight of the power he could wield or of the dignity of his position. He disseminated throughout the Hedjaz the fact that his rank was superior to that of any officer of the Porte; and that, even at Constantinople,

* The following inscription is written on the tomb of Shereef Ghalib in Salonika:

Here lies

Shereef Ghalib who came to Salonika at the order of the Government and died a few days later. The commands of God are greater than those of man. Do not have too much ambition for the things of this world, and forget not the life to come. What was he, and now what has he become?

Died 1231 A.H.

Shereef Hussein, son of Shereef Ghalib, died 1231 A.H.

Shereef Abdullah, son of Shereef Ghalib, died 1231 A.H.

K'amer, wife of Shereef Ghalib and mother of his daughter, Emira Shereefa, died 1231 A.H.

"Everything in Life is transitory."

Let all say a prayer for the repose of her soul.

Emira Shereefa, daughter of Shereef Ghalib, died 1231 A.H.

Shereef Mohammed Cherif, Grandson of Shereef Ghalib and son of Shereef Abdullah, died 1231 A.H.

A Prince of Arabia

the Sultan himself ought, in strictness of etiquette, to rise and salute him. In describing him Burkhardt states: "No more spirited and intelligent face can be imagined than was that of Shereef Ghalib." It was obvious that the Hedjaz was not large enough for two such men as Mohammed Ali and the Shereef Ghalib.

Having disposed of Ghalib and his three eldest sons, Mohammed Ali played upon the jealous rivalries in the immediate family of the dispossessed Emir in order to secure the appointment of a Grand Shereef who would be more amenable to his own ambitions. After a brief interval, during which a nephew of Ghalib succeeded to the Emirate, double-crossed Mohammed Ali, murdered a brother in the sacred precincts of the Kaaba and was forced into retirement in Egypt, the Egyptian conqueror decided to support the candidature of Ghalib's youngest son, Abdul Muttalib—a lad of seven. But he suddenly found he had to reckon with a new influence—that of a very remarkable woman.

The Shereefa Muzeymeh was the eldest child of the Grand Shereef Ghalib who had treated her as a favoured son. She had her own household and rode at the head of her horsemen dressed as a man in a flowing abbas and wearing the head-dress of a Shereef. Her influence was immense; she was so feared and respected that not even the Moslem hierarchy dared protest against her uncovered face. In those days of fanatical adherence to the Moslem traditions respecting womanhood, this was indeed astonishing. A daughter of the Prophet unveiled and a resolute leader of men!

Though of great beauty she placed power before love, and only those men who were willing to submit completely to her iron will received her favours. Her principal henchman was Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, a distant cousin. (Their common ancestor was eight generations back, and he belonged to a more junior branch of the Prophet's family.) Whether he was captivated by her personal charm or sought only for material advantage through obedience to her will is not clear, but he was both her slave and devoted admirer. No written records are available regarding this remarkable woman whose story has been handed down, in the manner of the East, from father to son in her own immediate family.

During his lifetime she prevailed on her father to attach Mohammed-ibn-Aoun to the personal staff of Ibrahim Pasha, son of Mohammed Ali. Thus, she was able to exert an influence in both camps. On Ghalib's death she was left one half of his total riches (about £2,000,000) and found herself in a more influential position than before. It was therefore in the interests of Mohammed Ali to

The Emirate of Mecca

cultivate the friendship of this wayward beauty, flatter her with gifts and praise, and support no candidate for the Emirate of whom she did not approve.

How did she feel about her young brother Abdul Muttalib? Would his election as Grand Shereef find favour in her eyes? The fact that she had been specially favoured by her father had created an understandable and bitter jealousy between her and all her brothers. The idea of this young lad being appointed to the Emirate filled her proud soul with fury.

"If you desire peace in the Hedjaz," she told Mohammed Ali with passion, "Mohammed-ibn-Aoun must be Grand Shereef!"

The Egyptian was dumbfounded. Not even he, with all his military power, had dared to suggest the appointment of a Grand Shereef who did not belong to the ruling family, but Muzeymeh assured him that she had every confidence in her own powers to establish this great precedent.

When the news reached Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, he reminded Ibrahim Pasha of a promise he had made some years before when he had first been attached to his staff. The Pasha had one day asked what he could do to show his appreciation of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun's assistance.

"What can you give me?" Mohammed asked.

"The Emirate of Mecca." Ibrahim spoke the words slowly and with emphasis.

But to Mohammed-ibn-Aoun the idea was fantastic. He burst out laughing.

"Why do you laugh?" Ibrahim was offended that his offer had been treated with such hilarity. "I swear it on my beard."

"But you have no beard," Mohammed retorted, "so how can I believe you?"

In deadly seriousness, Ibrahim Pasha pointed to his moustache. "On this, I swear it."

Impressed by his master's obvious sincerity, a new ambition surged in the breast of Mohammed who replied gravely: "On that then, I will trust you."

The appointment, of course, suited the ideas of Mohammed Ali who was, by now, virtually independent of the Sublime Porte, and had carved out for himself an hereditary satrapy on the banks of the Nile. To allow the Emirate of Mecca to remain in the hands of the Devi-Zeyd branch to which it had belonged for centuries might weaken his influence in the Hedjaz, whereas, if he gave his support and patronage to another more junior and poorer branch, the Grand

A Prince of Arabia

Shereef would be indebted to him for his protection and financial support. These considerations turned the scales in favour of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun's appointment. Mohammed Ali provided the support, the Shereefa Muzeymeh gave him property and money, and the Regadan Palace was built in Mecca for his use. He was given 3,000 men, told to march on Mecca and install himself in the Emirate. This he did without much difficulty, and Abdul Muttalib was removed to Stamboul where he lived in considerable state.

Thus the house of Devi-Aoun established its foothold in the Emirate of Mecca, and the descendants of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun owe their positions to-day both to the ambitions of Mohammed Ali and the jealousies of Shereefa Muzeymeh. A glance at the genealogical tree will show the connexion of the Devi-Aouns with the original line of Shereefs of Mecca, and it will be seen that to this branch of Shereefs belongs the family of Hussein, King of the Hedjaz at the end of the first Great War and protégé of T. E. Lawrence. With the establishment of the Devi-Aouns, the Turkish power and influence in the Hedjaz began to grow, and the appointment of the Grand Shereef became more and more dependent on the Ottoman Sultan.

At this period Mohammed Ali extended his occupation to Syria with the object of establishing a gradual control over the whole of Arabia. A few years later, however, in 1839, the Egyptian army suffered a number of serious reverses in Asir for which the Governor of Arabia, Khurshid Pasha, held Mohammed-ibn-Aoun to be largely responsible. He was suspected of being in league with the insurgent tribes, was deposed and sent to Cairo, where he was held a prisoner. During the ensuing year Mohammed Ali suffered further reverses and was obliged to evacuate part of Syria and the Hedjaz. Mohammed Ali therefore confined his ambitions to Egypt and surrendered all his claims in Arabia to the Turks, who then appointed Governors of their own selection.

Mohammed-ibn-Aoun was released in 1840 and returned to Mecca, where he resumed his former position as Grand Shereef, and this coincided with a declaration of independence on the part of the Wahhabi Emir, Feisal.

The freedom of these two potentates in Arabia now seriously alarmed the Sultan, who hastened to appoint a new Governor of the Hedjaz who would be able to curb the power of the Shereef and keep a watchful eye on the intrigues and activities of the Wahhabis.

The Governor appointed was Osman Pasha, and the improved methods of communication with the opening of the Suez Canal assisted the Turks in the policy they now wished to pursue.

The Emirate of Mecca

Since the destruction of Mohammed Ali's power in Syria, the Hedjaz, to all practical purposes, had again become an independent state, owing only nominal allegiance to the Turkish Sultan. The object of the Porte was now to occupy the Hedjaz and extend its influence over the whole of Arabia. The determination of the Shereef, and the Wahhabi Emir, was to preserve their power, maintain as much as possible the independence of their different States and prevent the stranglehold of that national consciousness which was particularly strong in these parts of the Arabian peninsula.

For one reason or another the Turks were never able to use their military forces with any success in Arabia against the wild tribes of the country. So their principle weapon was intrigue; the playing of one tribe against another, one chief against a potential rival. Osman Pasha, however, by an injudicious pursuit of this policy, so infuriated the tribes of the Hedjaz that they rose in rebellion. Led by the Grand Shereef, Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, they closed the route to Mecca and attacked the Turkish garrisons on the coast, with the result that, in 1850, the Ottoman Government was forced to buy an ignominious peace.

The Porte, however, was determined to destroy the spirit of independence shown by the Arabs of the Hedjaz and resolved to capture the motive power behind their revolt—the Grand Shereef, Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, whose wealth and influence were daily on the increase. Among the terms of the treaty which the Turks had previously signed, there was a clause in which it was agreed that no Turkish troops should be quartered in or near Mecca: but if they were to lay hands upon the Grand Shereef the presence of a strong force was essential. The opportunity was provided during the *Haj* when many thousands of pilgrims travelled from Jeddah to Mecca. Soldiers were disguised as pilgrims, and 1,000 were thus introduced into the Holy City. They surrounded the house of the Grand Shereef in secret in such a way that ibn-Aoun had no chance to lift a finger in his own defence; he was taken to Jeddah with two of his sons and together they were sent to Stamboul.

To whom now could the Turks look for a successor to Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, for it was impossible for them to maintain any sort of control over the people unless there was a Grand Shereef of the holy places? Without doubt the Sultan's desire was to abolish the post of Grand Shereef, but to attempt to do so would have driven the Arabs to such a state of religious frenzy that no Turk would have been able to stay in the Hedjaz. So they turned again to the original reigning family of Shereefs, that of Devi-Zeyd, and appointed for a second

A Prince of Arabia

time Abdul Muttalib, the youngest son of the Shereef Ghalib, who was dispossessed by Mohammed Ali in 1815. He arrived at Jeddah in 1851, where the Turkish Government flattered both him and the Arabs by arranging an official reception on a large scale to mark the importance of the occasion.

It was during this period that Sir Richard Burton made his historic pilgrimage to Mecca, and he describes the cavalcade of the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib in his picturesque style. "Abd al Muttalib bin Ghalib is a dark, beardless old man with African features derived from his mother. He was plainly dressed in white garments and a white muslin turband, which made him look jet black; he rode an ambling mule, and the only emblem of his dignity was the large green satin umbrella borne by an attendant on foot. Scattered around him were forty matchlock men, mostly slaves. At long intervals after their father came his four sons. The three elder brothers rode splendid dromedaries at speed; they were young men of light complexion, with the true Meccan cast of features, showily dressed in bright coloured silks, and armed, to denote their rank, with sword and gold hilted dagger." *

The Porte, however, determined to exercise more control over the activities of Shereef Abdul Muttalib, ordered Ahmed Pasha, who had succeeded Osman Pasha, to transfer his headquarters from Jeddah to Mecca. This so infuriated the Grand Shereef that, to show his contempt, he retired to Taif whence he directed his energies against the encroaching power of the Osmanlis, and refused to allow himself to be deceived by the brilliant and exaggerated demonstrations of respect shown him personally by the Turkish authorities. In 1855 the whole of the Hedjaz flared up in revolt, and the Turkish garrisons in both Mecca and Medina were besieged by an outraged population. The Sultan's name was no longer mentioned in the public prayers; the revolt spread and had repercussions even in Syria.

The Sultan was furious. He issued a decree depriving Abdul Muttalib of his position as Grand Shereef and authorized the restoration of the old Shereef Mohammed-ibn-Aoun. A large Turkish army was sent against Taif in order to capture Abdul Muttalib, but

* This description of the Shereef Abdul Muttalib was hotly contested by Ali Haider, and it is possible that Burton must have been guilty of mistaken identity. Abdul Muttalib was a tall, stately, dignified Emir of handsome bearing; his complexion was fair like that of an Arab of the Hedjaz and his mother was not an African. He was certainly not clean-shaven—an insulting suggestion for a Shereef in those days—and had a distinguished looking beard.

Contrary, too, to Burton's suggestion, Abdul Muttalib had a great admiration for the British, as this book will show, and was on most friendly terms with the Ambassador in Constantinople.

The Emirate of Mecca

it was defeated and driven back. The Porte, nevertheless, re-established ibn-Aoun in Mecca. This was a cunning move, for they knew that ibn-Aoun's personal ambitions were greater than his loyalty to the Arab national consciousness, and were thus able to encourage him to rally to the support of the Turks against the campaign conducted by Abdul Muttalib. A few months later, in 1856, Abdul Muttalib was captured by treachery and exiled to Stamboul, where he was again allowed to live in considerable state.

Mohammed-ibn-Aoun died in 1858, and was succeeded by his eldest son Abdullah, who now endeavoured, as far as he was able, to preserve the proud independence of his people.

In this year a serious riot occurred at Jeddah, in consequence of continued resentment at any interference with the slave trade, and two European consuls were killed. The Ottoman Government immediately sent a commission to Mecca to reorganize the country and, from that time, the power of the Shereefian Emirate was effectively curbed for many years.

Minor troubles with the Turks followed one after the other in quick succession, and Abdullah even tried to raise the enthusiasm of the Arabs in the Asir and Yemen to overthrow the Turks, who had established nominal but very precarious forms of government in those States. In this Abdullah overstepped the mark. The Porte lost patience with him and deposed him in 1876 in favour of a younger brother, Hussein. But Hussein was just as tactless and fell victim to the hand of a murderer.

During all this period Abdul Muttalib had been living in Stamboul where he was held in considerable veneration, and where it was hoped he would learn to appreciate the value of Turkish government and culture. Thus, when Hussein was murdered, it was decided to restore Abdul Muttalib to the Emirate for the third time, and he landed in Jeddah in 1879 amidst much public rejoicing.

It is a little before this period that we commence the story of the Shereef Ali Haider, favoured grandson of Abdul Muttalib, who had nominated him, in accordance with Arab custom, to be his successor and head of the family. Since the old Shereef lived to a great age, most of his sons, including the father of Ali Haider, predeceased him; hence, on Abdul Muttalib's death, Ali Haider had every reason to regard the throne of Mecca as his birthright. In the Shereef's story we are introduced to the intrigues which denied him the heritage he felt was his, and how the house of Devi-Aoun managed to retain the Emirate in their hands until the outbreak of World War I. Only when Shereef Hussein associated himself with the Arab revolt against

A Prince of Arabia

the Turks in 1916 was Ali Haider nominated Emir of Mecca by the Sultan, and his subsequent movements are of considerable interest in completing the picture of the Arab campaign.

His life was full of disappointments bravely borne, and those who had the privilege of making his acquaintance after the war sincerely hoped that in a resettlement of the Near East room would be found to place the Shereef Ali Haider in a responsible position whence his estimable qualities could have been utilized as a valuable contribution to that settlement. But this was not to be; and after much physical and mental suffering, his life came to an end in 1935.

Of the Shereef Ali Haider, Sir Harry Luke makes the following interesting comment in *The Making of Modern Turkey*: "The Shereef Ali Haider's wife was English; and, had events in the East taken a different turn and had Ali Haider replaced Hussein in the Emirate, the world would have witnessed the strange spectacle of an Englishwoman as the consort of the ruler of Mecca and Medina."

List of Sacred Relics delivered into the keeping of Sultan Selim I by the Grand Shereef Bereket of Mecca in A.D. 1517.

1. A Tooth of the Prophet.
2. A Pair of Clogs.
3. The Mantle of the Prophet.
4. A Precious Stone.
5. The Prayer Rug of the Prophet.
6. The Prayer Rug of Abu-Bekir.
7. A Sheath of a Sword.
8. An Arrow.
9. A Saucepan of Noah.
10. The Cauldron of Abraham.
11. A Sword of David.
12. A Gold 'Uluk' from Mecca.
13. A Silver Cup belonging to Abraham.
14. The Standard of the Prophet.
15. Two Swords of the Prophet.
16. The Shirt of the Patriarch Joseph.
17. The Keys of Mecca.
18. The Cover of the door of Mecca.
19. Water from the Prophet's Ablutions.
20. The Prayer Beads of the Prophet.
21. The Sword of Jaffer Feyhah.
22. The Sword of Halid-ibn-Zeah.
23. The Sword of Habul-ibn-Hassan.

The Emirate of Mecca

24. The Sword of Moase-ibn-Jebal.
25. Standards of Hassan and Hussein, grandsons of the Prophet.
26. Crown of the Vizer el Akrani.
27. Koran written by the Caliph Osman.
28. Koran written by the Imam Ali.
29. Koran written by Zenah Abbiddin, a follower.

And many other smaller things.

Sultan Selim built a palace in Serai Bournou where these relics were kept for more than 400 years. On the 15th day of Ramadan it was the custom for the reigning Sultan to proceed in state to this palace to pay reverence to the Holy Relics. These relics are now in Ankara.



1866-1885

The Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib in Stamboul

Birth and Early Life of Ali Haider

A Visit to Mecca. Schooldays

The Court of Abdul Hamid

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

CHAPTER ONE

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD

TO THE GRAND SHEREEF ABDUL MUTTALIB, the life of an exile in Stamboul was not altogether uncomfortable. His position as the recognized head of the House of the Prophet entitled him to so much respect that the Sultan Abdul Aziz could only treat him as an honoured guest. Besides, the Sultan considered that the ex-Emir of Mecca might be of use to him, since his presence in Stamboul and the possibility of his reinstatement in Mecca might impress upon Mohammed-ibn-Aoun the advisability of keeping on good terms with his Turkish masters. Abdul Muttalib, therefore, lived in the style becoming to a great Emir. In contrast to the sordid and forbidding atmosphere which haunted the walls of the Imperial Palace, the buildings that housed the Emir and his family always extended a hospitable welcome to rich and poor, to those in high position and to those in more humble circumstances.

Surrounded by his family; his wives from Caucasia, his sons, their wives and children; attended by slaves and eunuchs, and assisted in his duties by secretaries and other paid officials, the Grand Shereef lived as a veritable patriarch. In the quarter of Stamboul known as Toushan Tash he owned a great *konak*, a building of antiquity and historic associations which had been given to him by the Sultan. The *konak* included a spacious *harem* with a separate garden for the ladies of the household. The *selamlık*, or men's quarters, was connected to the *harem* by a passage known as the *marbein*, and another garden radiated from a large courtyard which provided the main entrance to the establishment. At night the men would enter the *harem* and leave any male visitors to sleep in the *selamlık*, to which they would return for breakfast after performing their ablutions and saying their prayers. Household affairs and general business would then be dealt with, but it was unusual for any man to enter the *harem* again

A Prince of Arabia

before nightfall. Messages between one portion of the establishment and another would be conveyed by eunuchs who continually passed to and fro.

This particular *konak* covered a large area of ground from which numerous secret passages led down to the waters of the Bosphorus. How often in the past had they been used to convey the victim of some sordid crime to these mysterious waters, whose peculiar currents rapidly disposed of hundreds of unwanted bodies. Perhaps, indeed, at times they had been the means of escape of some fugitive from justice—or injustice—as they must also have provided means of ingress for assassins. Although such passages were still of use in the palace of the Sultans, to Abdul Muttalib they were merely an awful relic of the past.

Here, in this *konak*, during the winter months, the ex-Emir of Mecca lived in state. In such respect was he held that no one ever entered the courtyard on horseback or even in a carriage: all stood when he passed by, and many even turned their faces to the wall as they were fearful to gaze on one of such exalted religious rank.

In the summer, the Emir would move over to a picturesque *yali* in Kanlijah, on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus. This *yali* was situated in an ideal position, and from its windows a magnificent view could be had of the towers and minarets of Stamboul glittering above the closely packed houses which stretched down to the water's edge. In the near foreground, the Golden Horn, crowded with shipping and bright with the flags of many nations, merged into the Sea of Marmora, across which there was a view interrupted only by the Princes Islands. Behind the *yali*, gardens stretched away up into the hills which were crowned with groves of dark cypress trees.

It was in this *yali* where the Shereef Ali Haider was born. In his own notes he records his birth and early childhood.

On a Friday night in the Arab year 1282 (A.D. 1866) I was born in Kanlijah in the *yali* of my grandfather which overlooked the Bosphorus. My father was Shereef Ali Jabir, son of the Grand Shereef of Mecca, Abdul Muttalib. My mother was a beautiful Circassian who died when I was only nine years of age. How bitterly

Birth and Boyhood

I missed her as a child in the *harem*, and I remember asking my grandfather to send me one of my stepmothers to comfort me.

At the time of my birth my grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, had been deposed by the Turks from his throne in Mecca for the second time, and was then living in Stamboul. He was everything to me, and I loved him dearly. Every one paid him honour and respect; many poor people profited by his generosity and he was always most liberal in his hospitality. His was a painful life passed in difficult circumstances, surrounded in Mecca by intrigue, troubled in soul by the wanton self-seeking of unworthy sons and sons-in-law. He himself was too honest, too God-fearing and high-minded to stoop to petty political intrigues. I have always considered it a privilege that my grandfather should have shown me so much affection and consideration—even more than he appeared to show his own sons. He trusted me with big responsibilities, and I tried to be worthy of his trust.

Once, when I was about seven years old, I remember going into my mother's room. In front of her was her large jewel and treasure box with which I loved to play. I started to turn out its contents when I came across a secret drawer I had not seen before. Inside were several papers. "Do not touch them," she said gently. "They are my debts. When you grow up, my son, you must pay them."

"No," I replied. "I will settle them now, without delay." I rushed out of the room.

"Wait," she cried, but I was already in the second salon at the door of my grandfather's quarters. Entering his presence I kissed his skirts. "What is the matter, my son?" he asked.

"My Lord," I replied, "my mother is in debt." I told him the whole story.

"Send the papers to the secretary, Hassan Effendi," he ordered. I went, took the papers myself and brought back the money to my mother. The prayers she then said for me I have never forgotten.

One day I saw strange preparations being made in the great *konak* at Toushan Tash, and I discovered that I was not allowed to enter the salon which connected the *selamlık* with the *harem*. As I puzzled why I could not enter, my grandfather from his quarters called to me: "Haider, it is time for your circumcision. Are you afraid?"

"No, my Lord," I replied.

"Suppose you are circumcised now, would you be ready?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"Then go; kiss the hand of your grandmother, put on your night-clothes and come." Thus I learnt the reason for these mysterious preparations.

A Prince of Arabia

Then began my education. Mardinli Mohammed Effendi acted, during *Ramadan*, as *Imam* to my grandfather. He worked at the Ministry of Justice and was a venerable man to whom I am very grateful. His wife was a *hodja* also and gave us reading and writing lessons in the *harem*. At Kanlijah there was a primary school which I attended during the summer and, during the winter, I went to a school at Bayazid in Stamboul.

Among the family of the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib the young Ali Haider had a number of playmates. In addition to his own brothers and sisters, who were younger, and several first cousins, there were boys of similar age to be found among his uncles. The old Emir believed in a large family and, at this period, his children ranged from the age of 45 to newly born. Some of the older ones had died, others had deserted the family and followed a life of adventure which did not altogether meet with the approval of the Emir, and others, even, carried on in a way that was prejudicial to his interests. His favourite son was Ali Jabir, the father of Ali Haider, who was generally recognized as his father's successor. Of the younger generation, including his own sons, Ali Haider had the most attention paid to him by Abdul Muttalib who always took the keenest interest in his upbringing. The childhood of these young Arabs was, in many respects, similar to that of any other children, apart from the fact that after the age of about 8, the boys would be segregated from the girls and no longer allowed to play in the *harem*.

I remember one Bairam day going into the presence of my grandfather in company with all the other children in the *konak*, when he presented each one of us with a little money. We were very pleased, and immediately held a meeting to discuss what we should do with it. "Let us have a smoking party," said the older ones. We all agreed and provided five piastres each. The tobacco was then ordered, and we searched round for a discreet corner where we would be undisturbed. Leading to the *harem* gardens was a large carriage doorway which was never used, and over it a great creeper had spread itself. It was considered that this creeper would provide excellent shelter for us. We obtained a large block of wood from the wash-house, procured some cigarette papers and matches, and then awaited the arrival of the tobacco.

Birth and Boyhood

I grew impatient so, to pass the time, I went into the *selamlık*. When I imagined that the tobacco had arrived I started to return through the *harem*, but had not gone far before I heard excited female voices. "They will set fire to the house," one declared. "Look what they are doing!" I stopped, and quickly realized that not only had the tobacco arrived, but also that the smoking party had been discovered. I knew what that would mean in the way of punishment, so I turned and ran to the room of the Chief Eunuch, where I seized a pen and some paper and pretended to write. My ears, however, were alive to every sound.

At length the Chief Eunuch came in and told me I was wanted. I hesitated; but the eunuch was a witness that I was writing in his room. I then went to the *harem* and, in the grand salon, I found all the other children standing in a row looking like cats whose milk had been upset; and on the floor in front of them a two oke tin of tobacco, piles of cigarette papers, matches, and cigarettes that had already been made. All had been caught red-handed, since they had filled the garden with smoke from the log which had attracted the attention of the women who had sent word to my grandmother. She had then sent for my father who was now questioning the culprits.

He had called for me because it was incredible to him that such a prank could take place without my being a party to it. So he had sent the eunuch to find me. "Where were you?" he asked.

"I was in the *selamlık*—in the steward's room—my Lord."

"Was he not with you?" he enquired of the other children. With a thin voice the answer came: "No." Ah, thank God, I thought.

"What were you doing?" said my father.

"I was writing, Effendimez."

"Go back to your writing," he ordered, and in great haste I fled from the room. All the other children were punished, and swore an oath never to do such things again: the tobacco was taken away and the money given to their elders to keep for them.

As soon as I heard that my father had gone back to the *selamlık* I rushed into the *harem* to find out what had happened. All the faces of the children were as red as beetroots; they were furious with me, some threatening, some suspicious and others enquiring why I also had not been punished.

"What have I done?" I said. "What I want to know is what has happened to you?" But none would explain, and no one would even listen to me.

On another occasion my step-mother saw a cigarette in my hand. "You wait," she said. "I will tell your father." More than the

A Prince of Arabia

fear of the actual punishment was the fear of looking in my father's face, so I ran away and hid among the logs of wood which were kept in the immense shed used for laundry work. The *harem* was searched for me from top to bottom, and nowhere could I be found. Meal time came and passed, every corner was examined and, at length, the crier was sent round shouting: "Where are you Haider Bey? Wherever you are come out, for whatever you have done is forgiven." What excitement there was, since every one feared that I was altogether lost! But not until dusk fell did I emerge, when I crept out and went to my step-mother who asked me very gently where I had been. I told her. "My son," she said, "from morning we have searched for you. Please do not do this sort of thing again." And there the matter dropped.

Once, at Kanlijah, I was watching the *yorghangi* (mattress maker, coverer of cushions, etc.) working with some new covers, and I felt in need of a cigarette. So I rolled one and, gazing out at sea, I blew spirals of smoke in different shapes, in order to show off before the workmen. My father suddenly appeared without my knowledge: I heard a loud voice and my heart beat fast. There was no escape. "What are you doing?" he asked.

"Nothing," I replied, crushing the cigarette so hard in my hands that only dust remained. He came forward, examined my clothes, but found no sign.

"Let me smell your breath," he ordered, and I felt that the crisis had come. I could not disguise that, and I knew it. There and then he gave me a thrashing on my feet * and shut me up in a cupboard, and, because this was all done before the workmen, it had a terrible effect upon me. Happily the cupboard was large; one side was full of mattresses and on the other side was a pile of water melons. I love melons, so I began to eat. How long I remained there I do not know, but finally my uncle, Hashim, released me, told me to go to my father, kiss his hand and promise that I would never smoke again. I kissed his hand but said nothing; neither did he. I then went to the *harem*, but found it most difficult to satisfy the curiosity of those who kept asking where I had been, as I felt ashamed at having been punished before the workmen.

It made me miserable to be told by all the grown-ups not to smoke, although I do not believe they realized its harmful effects upon the young. Anyhow, they never bothered to explain its harm to me. A

* The usual form of corporal punishment was administered by a thrashing on the soles of the feet. A wooden frame to protect the toes was secured and held the feet together. The rod for beating was termed the *falaka*.

Birth and Boyhood

great deal of smoking went on in the household, but in the *harem* it was generally only a few lady visitors who would indulge in the habit. My grandfather, however, had some beautiful chibouks and long handled pipes, others had lovely jewelled cigarette cases and enamelled holders. But to us our elders merely said: "You must not smoke, children." There the matter ended without any explanation. At a tender age I got used to smoking, and punishment did not deter me. For many years I did not realize the harm until my health began to suffer, and only then did I give it up.

Once my uncle Fahad, who was only four years older than myself, incurred the anger of my grandfather who had him confined in a small room. I always felt I could speak to my grandfather freely without any fuss or ceremony, so, growing anxious for Fahad, I went and asked for him to be forgiven. "My Lord," I begged, "please forgive my uncle and let him come and play with me."

"Very well, my son," he replied, "go and play with him where he now is." So I went along and I, too, found myself confined for interfering, and had to remain there until the evening, during which time Fahad and I quarrelled, made friends and then quarrelled again. Finally the order came for us both to be released, and we entered the presence of the Emir. He smiled and said: "How did you enjoy it, Haider? Will you again interfere to set your uncle free?"

"No, sir," I replied, "I certainly will not." For some days afterwards I felt unhappy since, through no fault of my own, I had been shut up.

So interested was the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib in the education of Ali Haider, and so proud was he of the intelligence shown by his grandson that, even before he was ten years old, he would often attach him to his personal staff when he paid visits to Ministers and other people of importance. At this period Stratford Canning, afterwards the famous Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, was British Ambassador, and Ali Haider records an occasion when he accompanied his grandfather to the residence of the Grand Vizier, Rechid Pasha, where Canning happened to be present.

"The son of the Holy Prophet," said Rechid Pasha introducing my grandfather. Canning was both courteous and respectful. "Had I lived in the time of the Prophet," he said, "I, too, would have been a Moslem."

Rechid Pasha was very nervous about the Englishman's remark as

A Prince of Arabia

he did not know how the Emir would receive it, and he feared some unpleasantness. "It is a good thing that you did not," said my grandfather; and Rechid Pasha grew more nervous. He just gazed at the two of them and seemed too frightened to speak. For a moment there was silence, and then the Emir said to Canning: "Why do you not ask me the reason?"

"Why, then, Effendimez?"

"Well, if you had become a Moslem, you would then have only been just one among others such as Ali and Omar, whereas now you are the friend of all Moslems. You are in a position to do much for them; you extend the hand of friendship to the Grand Vizier of the Caliph; you help him in many ways, and can thus be of much service to the whole world."

Rechid Pasha thanked the Emir for his courteous remarks; Canning was delighted and expressed a wish to call upon my grandfather. "I will be most pleased to see you, and you will be very welcome," said the Emir, "but please do not expect me to return your visit. I am an old man."

Later, on that same day, Rechid Pasha paid a special visit to our *konak* to thank the Emir in person for his diplomatic attitude towards the British Ambassador. "There was a question," he said, "between us and the British Government that we were endeavouring to settle, and your kind words so smoothed the way that we were able to come to a satisfactory agreement."

A few days afterwards Canning paid his call on my grandfather, and also came again from time to time. Once, just before he went on business to England, he asked the Emir if he could bring him anything back from that country, but the Emir thanked him and replied: "No." When Canning returned, however, he presented the Emir with a little wooden snuff-box and also a pair of field glasses. Since my grandfather never used any gold or silver articles, a gift of greater value would have been out of place.

Canning was a man of clear insight, great pertinacity and possessed of a statesman-like mind; he saw that the great object to be accomplished for making a homogeneous people of the various races under Turkish rule was the substitution of religious equality for the dominancy of the Turkish Moslems. In this he received the tacit support of Abdul Muttalib, who was tolerant and broad minded when judged by the standards in which he lived. To a very great extent

Birth and Boyhood

Canning was responsible for the birth of reform in the administration of Turkey and her subject peoples, and his great triumph was his extortion from the Sultan Abdul Aziz of a document known as the *Hatti-huma-yun*, which has often been regarded as the Magna Charta of the Turkish peoples. Among its provisions were those dealing with religious liberty, and, though many of these provisions were constantly violated, the fact that such a document was on the Statute Book, fixed the first step in the ladder of reform. Ministers were to become the real rulers of the country, which was slowly blundering its way out of barbarism.

The minds of many thoughtful Turks were now directed towards reforms, and a number of able men conceived the idea that Turkey's future advancement depended on her progress along European lines. They met with ready sympathy from the British Ambassador, as public opinion in Great Britain had been deeply stirred by the stories of Turkish misrule towards her Christian populations. The most prominent among the reformers was Midhat Pasha, but they recognized that the great obstacle in their way was the Sultan Abdul Aziz himself. He was the type of ruler who would tolerate anything for a quiet life except change. Midhat Pasha was on friendly terms with the Grand Shereef to whom he would often outline his schemes for reform, but the Emir, though a ready and sympathetic listener, never allowed himself to be drawn into active participation.

On the 30th May 1876 Sultan Abdul Aziz suddenly found himself a prisoner. The only persons who took an active part in his deposition were Midhat Pasha and Hussein Avni, the Minister of War, and they executed their plan with courage and resolution. At dead of night the palace was surrounded, without any alarm being raised, and the Sultan was urged to put himself in the hands of the Minister of War, who would answer for his safety. The *coup* was both sudden and unexpected, and its success lay both in the secrecy with which it was carried out and the daring displayed by those who engineered it. The deposition was received with general satisfaction, not only inside Turkey, but also in the chancelleries of Western Europe. Abdul Aziz, however, did not submit to his

A Prince of Arabia

kismet with the philosophy that might have been expected and, a few days later, died by his own hand. When this news became known it was natural that many should suspect foul play, and so great was the importance attached to the subjugation of this rumour that 19 eminent physicians, belonging to different nationalities, were called to pronounce an impartial verdict. Without one dissentient voice they determined that suicide was the cause of death, and this was fully accepted by the widows of the dead Sultan.

The law of succession provided for the eldest male in the family, whether he was uncle, nephew, brother or son, to assume the Sultanate. In this case the strict successor to Abdul Aziz was his nephew Murad. But Murad had qualities that did not appeal to the reformers, and Midhat Pasha wanted him passed over in favour of his younger brother, Abdul Hamid, who showed both intelligence and a keen interest in the schemes for improvement of the administration. This, however, was not allowed by the judges of the Sacred Court, and Murad was enthroned as Murad V. Some said he was mad, others that he was weakminded, but all agreed that he was unsuitable as Sultan. A few months later the Court of the Sheikh-ul-Islam issued a *fetva* that Murad was incapable. His deposition was easily arranged, and Abdul Hamid was declared Sultan.

Murad was quite content to retire into private life, and lived as a prisoner until 1904. Years afterwards his widow told one of the ladies in the household of Ali Haider that Murad was never really mad, though he was in a bad nervous condition, brought on, possibly, by an ill-advised taste for cognac. "After his deposition," she said, "we lived a normal life in his palace, three sides of which were enclosed by high walls, and the fourth was bounded by the Bosphorus." This lady, however, was herself a prisoner, together with the other wives, sons and daughters, slaves and eunuchs, who surrounded Sultan Murad. All were kept behind the palace walls, the high doors of which were securely fastened and only opened twice a day for food to be brought in. No doctor or physick passed the gates; no visitors were permitted and new clothes were unknown. The windows had high lattices through

Birth and Boyhood

which the princesses could peep across the waters of the Bosphorus which was their only view, but no boats were allowed to approach within a quarter of a mile. A *hodja-hanum*, or lady teacher, was shut up with them and her duties were to give instruction in the Turkish language. Their only recreation was music, as was also that of the deposed Sultan, who composed tunes and wrote down the strains of any distant band he happened to hear.

Thus began the reign of 'Abdul the Damned.' He was brought to the throne on the understanding that he would grant the reformers even more than they were asking, that he would regenerate Turkey with such improvements in her administration that her rank would be equal to that of any European Power, and that his Ministers would be allowed full responsibility to act as they thought right. No sooner, however, had he been girt with the sword of Osman, than Abdul Hamid destroyed every promise he had given. For government by Ministers he imposed himself as the sole ruler of the Empire, and he became both jealous and suspicious of any Minister who was either eager in making reforms, or in taking any steps which had not previously met with his approval. Back with a rush came the maladministration and corruption of centuries; the ideals of the reformers were shattered, and the hopes and aspirations of foreign governments—particularly the British—were dashed to pieces. Midhat, and other members of his party, who had urged the establishment of a Constitution, were ignominiously dismissed on the 5th February 1877.

The failure of an International Conference in Turkey to secure better treatment for oppressed Christians in the Balkan States, provoked a war with Russia which was declared on the 24th April. A year of successful campaigns for the Russian forces ended in the Treaty of San Stephano, as a result of which the independence of Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro was recognized. Bulgaria obtained her autonomy which, nevertheless, meant the payment of a tribute to Constantinople.

Through the significant events of 1876-8 Abdul Muttalib moved warily. Though he was interested in the question of

A Prince of Arabia

Turkish reform, particularly as it affected the administration of the Hedjaz, yet it was no direct concern of his to interfere in the internal politics of Turkey. His interests lay in the maintenance of good terms with those in power, whoever they happened to be, and keeping ever before them his importance as a factor to be reckoned with in all matters connected with Arabia. If he played his cards wisely he knew that he stood a reasonable chance of regaining the Emirate of Mecca: if he gambled with the uncertainties of Turkish politics he might lose, not only his treasured prospects, but also his head. He had shown friendship to Midhat, but when Midhat tried to enlist the help of the Grand Shereef in the deposition of Abdul Aziz, he had replied: "I am unwell."

Now that Abdul Hamid had confirmed himself in an autocracy that could not be lightly shaken, it was incumbent on the old Emir to demonstrate his unswerving loyalty towards the person of the Sultan and, at the same time, keep him fully alive to the fact that it was his own direct ancestor, Shereef Bereket, who had loaned to Sultan Selim I the Sacred Relics which had qualified him and his successors for the title of Caliph. The successes, however, which had attended the Russian arms in their war against the Turks had their reactions in the Hedjaz, and the Emir therefore thought it advisable for his son, Ali Jabir, to proceed to Mecca, look after his interests, and keep the name of Abdul Muttalib before the eyes of his countrymen. A few months later the Emir suggested that the young Shereef Ali Haider should join his father and acquire some first-hand knowledge of the country he hoped one day to rule. This was to be the only occasion on which Ali Haider was to visit the holy city of Mecca. He describes his travels and the life he lived there.



The Shereef Ali Haider. Aged 7

CHAPTER TWO

A VISIT TO MECCA

WITH MY YOUNGER BROTHER AND SISTERS I travelled to Mecca under the care of a Hedjazi, and we were met at Jeddah by my father. At this time Abdullah, eldest son of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, was Grand Shereef of Mecca, his father having superseded my grandfather when he was deposed in 1856. But, shortly after my arrival, the Emir Abdullah had a paralytic stroke and died, to be succeeded by his brother Hussein. We were pleased to be rid of Abdullah, and had hoped that my grandfather would have become Grand Shereef in his place. But this was not to be.

We had a teacher, but he taught us only the Koran. This *hodja* was a very harsh and cruel man who thrashed me frequently when I did not deserve it. If the cushion on which he sat was not in place, or the book from which he taught was not ready, the birch would be used upon me. One day my young slave, Selim, who learnt the Koran with me, thought he would revenge himself on this old tyrant of a *hodja* by sticking a big needle in the cushion on which he sat. The *hodja's* anger when he felt the needle caused us much amusement, but Selim explained to him that the cushion had just been newly covered and that the needle must have been left there by mistake. This *hodja* grew so violent, and the thrashings he gave me became so frequent, that at last my step-mother refused to allow him to be brought for our lessons any more.

Life for the young Shereef in Mecca was dull and hedged about by irksome restrictions. No toys of foreign origin were permitted and a humming top which came into Ali Haider's hands was promptly destroyed by his father. The only pleasure he enjoyed was an occasional ride into the mountains, but these were fraught with danger and tragedy, and the Shereef records how, during storms, he lost two of his younger brothers. Their camels slipped and fell on the treacherous tracks, dashing their riders to pieces on the rocks below.

Frequent attacks of malaria reduced the little boy to a wreck of his former self; he began to weary of Mecca and longed to return to his grandfather in Stamboul. On the other hand

A Prince of Arabia

he did not want to leave his own father; but life grew more and more unbearable.

Then, one day, there came a letter from his grandfather asking for his return, and Ali Haider was unable to disguise his joy. Mounted on dromedaries, his father and uncle accompanied him to Jeddah, but, while waiting for the boat, the young Shereef developed measles. This, on top of his already weakened health, left him more feeble than ever when the Egyptian steamer, *Zagazig*, finally arrived, and he climbed on board feeling sick and weary.

I said good-bye to my father and he kissed me, saying: "My son, if you want my blessing do not anger your grandfather. Take his advice and respect him always."

Alone with my *lala* (servant), Ferhat, I watched the boat carry my father back to the shore.

Then the ship got under way and, from afar off, I gazed upon our Jeddah home, Hosh Abu el Heir, because I knew my father would be there. I turned away at last. On the other side of the ship, I saw a man watching me as if he wished to speak. His face seemed full of light, his head was covered, and he had a grey beard which reached down to his chest. As I did not know him, I took no notice for I was too preoccupied. Towards evening the old man drew near and salaamed. I acknowledged his salaam.

"What is your name?" he asked. I told him.

"Whose son are you?" he then queried.

"The son of Ali Jabir," I replied, but feeling wretched and ill I did not wish to talk. So I wandered up and down; but the old man followed me and spoke again: "Where are you going?"

"To Stamboul," I replied.

"To whom are you going?"

"To His Highness the Shereef Abdul Muttalib."

"What is he to you?" he continued.

"He is my grandfather."

"Do you love him very much?" he asked.

"Naturally I do: very dearly."

He paused a moment and then said gently: "I see that you are ill."

"Yes," I said in a voice that must have been scarcely above a whisper.

"Have you any medicine?" he then asked. I shook my head. "That will not do," he continued. "You must see a doctor at once."

A Visit to Mecca

As he spoke I began to forget he was a stranger, and I felt compelled to take his advice. So he called the Captain, Mohammed, and said to him: "The Shereef must see a doctor. It is essential." The ship's doctor came, examined me all over and produced some medicine, while the old man assumed control. At regular intervals he would give me a dose and ask how I was feeling. Then he asked again: "Do you really love your grandfather very much?"

"Yes," I replied, "very much indeed."

Later on, I asked the Captain who the old man was, and he replied: "His name is Seyid Abdullah, a follower of God. He belongs to a good family and has travelled several times in this ship. He is very wise." This Captain Mohammed was very religious and commanded much respect. To me he was always sympathetic and gave me every attention.

From that time my friend, Seyid Effendi, cared for me and even began to order me about. He used to tell me when I sat on deck: "Go to your cabin and lie down." Or, if I was in my cabin, he might order me on deck to take the air. Somehow or other I felt obliged to obey him, and was surprised at myself for doing so. I said to myself: "Why am I obliged to obey this man? He has a deck ticket and I am travelling first class." I could never find the answer but continued to obey. Then one day he simply said: "I want to be with you."

"Very well," I replied, "let us ask the Captain and I will settle any difference in the cost." But the Captain would not hear of taking any money for Seyid Effendi, and so the old man came to my cabin without extra charge. He would enquire constantly about my health, give me my medicine and perform his own religious observances. Thus, we continued our journey.

Then one evening he was much disturbed, and told both me and the Captain to recite certain verses from the Koran, while he himself went to say his prayers. Shortly he returned and said: "Thanks be to Allah, we have passed the danger." We looked at one another and wondered what he meant, but very shortly a great storm arose. Seyid Effendi, like a barometer, knew before the Captain what dangers lay ahead. At this, to-day, the cynical may smile, but I write of what I saw and do not care how people talk. In the words of the Koran: *God is in me and in my people, till the Resurrection.*

Thanks to the prayers of the Seyid, his constant care, together with the sea air, I gradually began to get stronger. The Captain gave us the use of his cabin and the run of all the first class deck, as there were no other first class passengers. Once, as I was squatting on a

A Prince of Arabia

rare and beautiful rug my father had given me at our last farewell, smoking a cigarette and gazing out to sea, Seyid Abdullah came up and knocked the cigarette out of my hand. I was most indignant, but when the Seyid told me it would ruin my health and retard my growth I recognized his care for my interests and accepted the correction. All the same, I was annoyed at the liberty he had taken as I loved my cigarettes.

The boat was strange and very old. We coasted up the African side of the Red Sea and embarked a variety of animals which transformed the ship into a veritable Noah's Ark. There was hardly an animal that did not appear to be on board. Two little elephants, lions, leopards, horses, zebra, camels, many other strange animals and birds, together with the most peculiar looking men from Africa that I had ever seen.

Eight days after leaving Jeddah, the *Zagazig* reached Suez where every one disembarked and the young Shereef proceeded by train to Alexandria. Here he waited another week before embarking in a ship bound for Stamboul. To his great delight, his friend, Seyid Effendi, had suddenly appeared at his Alexandria residence and announced his intention of going with Ali Haider to Stamboul; but he made some reservations.

"On the day that I arrive," he said, "I wish to make a pilgrimage to your grandfather and, on the second day to the shrine of His Holiness Halid * at Eyoub. On the third day I shall return, if I can find a boat."

I boarded the steamer, *Fayoum*, in good time and, as I sat on deck watching the shore, I saw a boat approach with Seyid Effendi. He had again only bought a deck ticket, but on application to the Captain, a Maltese, he was allowed to use first class accommodation without extra payment. The *Fayoum* was very different to the *Zagazig*. It was large, fast and well decorated. On the first night at sea the moon was very beautiful, and the second Captain, an Egyptian, gathered some of the officers round him and sang. Their voices were good and, as I listened, my health seemed to improve and I became much happier.

We reached Smyrna. I was in the cabin when Seyid Effendi entered and took ten mejidiehs from his wallet. I thought he might want some more, so I, too, opened my purse, but he merely said:

* One of the Prophet's Commanders buried on the banks of the Golden Horn.

A Visit to Mecca

"Bring me also ten mejidiehs." He then went down to the saloon. I had plenty of gold but only nine mejidiehs in silver, and I thought to myself that only one mejidieh short would make no difference. So, with the nine mejidiehs in my hand, I followed the Seyid to the saloon. Before he could even see what I had, he said: "It is one short. I do not want what you have there." I was startled, went to Feraat, my *lala*, borrowed one mejidieh from him, and returned to the Seyid with the ten.

"If I want money for myself," he said, "God will give it. This money I give, in your name, to the poor in Smyrna." He then went ashore and returned some hours later.

Two days afterwards we arrived at Stamboul, and my grandfather sent his specially trained three-oared caïque to meet me. In it were my young uncles, Shereef Fahad and Shereef Hashim, and their servant, Sardic Agha. I went forward to meet them, kissed their hands and we embraced. They told me to come with them, but I hesitated, and they asked the reason. I then explained that I had a saintly and honoured visitor with me, but they began to joke. "The last saint," they jeered. "Let him stay with your baggage. Come with us."

I was obliged to obey, but begged them to wait a moment while I went to see what had happened to the Seyid. But he was not thinking about us and had mingled with the crowd; so I returned to the caïque. Swiftly the boatmen pulled us across the waters of the Bosphorus to our *yali* at Kanlijah, where our *aghas* (upper servants) were waiting at the landing. Immediately I asked for my grandfather. "He is not yet in the *selamlık*," was the reply. So I hurried to the *harem*. I met him in the garden, walking towards the *selamlık*, rushed towards him and kissed his hands and feet.

"Ah, Haider!" he said gently. Then: "Go in and see your grandmother." Instantly I obeyed his order. Poor grandmother was still greatly affected by the death of her two grandchildren, but felt more resigned when I told her of my father and the family. I then returned to my grandfather.

"Sit down," he said, and I obeyed. Then he questioned me about my father, the family I had left behind, and asked about my journey. He thought me looking very thin and I told him about my illness. Then the time came for me to speak about the Seyid, but I shrank from doing so. Perhaps he would not receive him and, maybe, protest at my having had anything to do with him. Many disquieting thoughts came to my mind with the recollection of the contemptuous attitude adopted by my uncles. They had laughed so much, and

A Prince of Arabia

joked about him. But silence was no use, hence, I decided that, whatever happened, I just had to mention him.

"My Lord," I said, "I brought a visitor with me."

"Who is he, my son?" he asked.

"One of the Seyids Abdullah."

Immediately he asked: "Where is he? Let him enter now."

"Effendimez," I said, "he remained in the ship with my baggage. Please give orders for him to be brought here."

Immediately Sadic Agha was sent back in the three-oared caique. "He is to bring the Seyid back at once," ordered my grandfather. Never had I been so happy, and my grandfather asked me the reason for my joy. I then told him the whole story, about the Seyid's care and attention for me, and my agreement with him about his visit to Stamboul. He was very pleased at my story, and I then obtained his permission to return to the *harem*. There were many people in the *harem*, and I began talking first to one and then to another until I became so absorbed that I forgot all about the Seyid. Then suddenly the Chief Eunuch, Nasib Agha, came in a great hurry and said our Lord and master wanted me.

Hurriedly I ran to him, and found my grandfather had seated the Seyid by his side in the *selamlik*. As I entered his presence, the Seyid said to him: "Your son Haider loves you very much and I envy you." My grandfather smiled, the Seyid blessed me and I withdrew. On that day the Seyid completed his pilgrimage to my grandfather, on the next he visited the shrine of Hasret Halid and on the third day he departed. My grandfather had said to him: "Next year we will meet in Mecca at the Haj."

My uncles often used to tease me about this Seyid and enquire after the health of my holy man, but he had done much for me as though it were a duty and—praise be to Allah—he blessed me often. Strangely enough one day on board, after leaving Smyrna, he had said: "You are going to the Capital where you will see the Sultan and be found among his sons." He also prophesied other things about me, and they all came true.

CHAPTER THREE

SCHOOLDAYS

ALI HAIDER RETURNED TO STAMBOUL IN 1879, by which time Abdul Hamid was thoroughly secure in his position as an autocratic sovereign. All the able reformers had given place to a succession of Ministers who were entirely subservient to their Imperial Master, and the whole edifice of Turkish Government was built on a system of spying and counter spying, which grew in perplexity as the reign proceeded. To hold different opinions from a Minister was a recommendation, in the Sultan's eyes, for the appointment of a man to the post of Assistant Minister. Each of the two would act as a check, that is as a spy, upon the other. Seldom in the history of the world has there been such a hot-bed of intrigue as Constantinople during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and, in the intrigues, were mixed the representatives of the Great Powers whom the Sultan was at liberty to play off one against another. Russia dreamt and worked for the annexation of Constantinople, and the free outlet for her shipping she would thereby acquire; Germany sought to insinuate herself into the country in order to construct a Berlin-Baghdad railway which would give her control of the Near East, and Great Britain and France worked inharmoniously to thwart both these schemes and maintain a weak but well-governed Turkey. All blundered; and their blundering produced the chaos which was to reach its climax in the first World War.

It was the genius of Canning which first recognized that in dealing with Turkey, especially in compelling her to do justice to her Christian populations, Europe ought to be united. But the very reverse was, in practice, the case. A parable often related in Moslem coffee houses represents a conception of Turkey during this period. The carcass of a sheep was suspended in a *Han* at a height sufficient to be beyond the reach of the village dogs. Nevertheless each of them tried to snatch a mouthful. Sometimes they succeeded, but each and all had

A Prince of Arabia

failed to detach the carcass, and the combined attempts usually ended in quarrels in the village pack. The suspended carcass represented Turkey; the pack of wolf-like dogs stood for the European Powers. Of the Great Powers, the one in the end who achieved the greatest diplomatic success was Germany and, even as early as 1879, a German military mission under General von der Goltz was employed in the service of the Sultan.

Turkey's attitude towards her Arabian subjects may best be illustrated by the story of the *Wali* who ordered the destruction of all the date palms of a certain desert sheikh, because they furnished not only food but also comparative wealth to an Arab tribe who exported crushed dates to England. His idea was that members of the tribe must be kept poor in order that they should be subservient.

Towards the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib the Sultan was friendly, and he held this distinguished descendant of the Prophet in great veneration. So far as he trusted anybody the Sultan trusted the Emir who, for his own prospects, took good care to see that this trust was not misplaced. Abdul Hamid had come to stay, and Abdul Hamid was the power to be reckoned with. The Grand Shereef on the one hand desired the Sultan to take a personal interest in his family, and Abdul Hamid on the other considered it politic to establish a close understanding with possible future Emirs of Mecca. The Emir, therefore, took the first convenient opportunity to introduce the young Ali Haider to His Majesty as his future successor, and the Sultan made arrangements for his education to be carried out in company with the Imperial Princes at the Palace School. The young Shereef gives a description of his introduction to, and life in, the Imperial School.

For two months I was allowed to rest and gather back my strength and then, one day, my grandfather summoned me into his presence. I was then 12 years old. Yemenli Mahmoud Jabir Effendi was with him, and he ordered that man to take me to the Sultan's palace. So together we went to the Sultan's First Chamberlain, Hamdi Pasha, who received me. He then announced my visit to the Sultan and returned saying: "I told His Majesty of your visit and he was very grateful. To your grandfather he sends his very special salaams and

Schooldays

hopes that you will come one day with him to see His Majesty. I receive you to-day," the First Chamberlain added, "but next time you will see the Sultan."

How I loved our *yali* at Kanlijah, and it was such a pity that my uncle later sold it! How happy we were all together—my grandfather, his sons, their wives and children! With his presence my dear grandfather seemed to illuminate it all. Ministers, Grand Viziers, the greatest and best known among the people, the richest and the poorest, all came to call and, on Bairam days, hosts of visitors would come to kiss the hands, the knees, the skirts and the feet of my grandfather. Behind the *yali* were large pine trees which I felt gave a special atmosphere to the grounds. They were not only decorative, but seemed to hold a special personality. Underneath the pine trees was a little kiosk which I loved. Nowhere else could such a lovely garden as this be seen.

One day my grandfather was pleased to give the order for his caïque to be got ready for him. Together we embarked, and were swiftly rowed across the Bosphorus to Bechiktash. At the landing-place a carriage was waiting, and we drove straight to the palace of the Sultan at Yildiz where the First Chamberlain, Hamdi Pasha, received us with much ceremony. After the announcement of our arrival, we were escorted to the chief kiosk in the grounds where Sheikh Jafur Effendi, Ahmed Essad Effendi and others came to greet my grandfather. Refreshments were then brought, which we had hardly tasted when there was a sudden rush and all hurried out into the garden. Even my grandfather rose and walked towards the entrance of the kiosk. I followed. Behind were many men dressed in as many different ways.

Then appeared the Sultan Abdul Hamid, who walked straight up to my grandfather, took his hands and kissed them. Together they walked in the garden whilst the Sultan salaamed to those around who bent down to him in homage. My grandfather introduced me to His Majesty, who expressed great pleasure at meeting me. All then withdrew leaving our trio secluded. The Sultan asked me questions about Mecca with special enquiries about horses. There had been a great deal of sickness among the horses in the Hedjaz that year, and we had lost many of our best. The Sultan seemed surprised at the lack of veterinary surgeons. He then ordered me to go round the gardens while he talked to my grandfather alone.

Someone took me to see the aviary where the Sultan and my grandfather later joined me. Towards the Emir the Sultan showed the greatest attention and described the different kinds of birds to him.

A Prince of Arabia

To my mind my grandfather was always great, but when I saw him with the Sultan Abdul Hamid he seemed greater still.

At length the Sultan said to me: "Your grandfather has given permission for you to attend school to-morrow." He turned to my grandfather and added: "I want the young Shereef to be educated with the Princes in the Palace School. Will you give permission?" My grandfather thanked him and, when we rose to say good-bye, the Sultan again turned to me and said: "To-morrow, then, you will come to school. Your horse will be waiting for you at the Bechiktash landing-place." I thanked him and we departed.

On re-entering the room of the First Chamberlain we met the Sultan's eldest son, Mohammed Selim Effendi, and also Shefket Effendi, the son of the former Sultan Abdul Aziz. (Turkish Princes were always called 'Effendi'.) They were waiting for us, kissed my grandfather's hand and we salaamed. When saying good-bye to the aged Hamdi Pasha, who accompanied us to the door of our carriage, he significantly remarked: "At Bechiktash you will find a caique that is not your own waiting for you." However, at the landing-place we only saw our own and embarked in that, but had not been pulled more than a few strokes before we saw the Sultan's five-oared caique appear. We then transferred to the Sultan's caique, and our own followed us to the landing-place at Kanlijah. My grandfather was pleased with this attention shown him by the Sultan.

My grandfather gave the order that I was to attend school early in the morning and, from among his own servants, he selected Moustapha Agha to be my *lala*. How strange it was that the Seyid's prophecy should thus be fulfilled!

On the next day, travelling by the Bosphorus ferry to Bechiktash, thence on horseback to the Royal Kiosk, Ali Haider was introduced to his classmates—two sons of Abdul Hamid and three sons of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz. Among the latter was Abdul Mejid Effendi, destined to be the last of the Caliphs, with whom the young Shereef developed a strong and lasting friendship. Sons of important Pashas also attended this school, but they worked in different classrooms.

There was also a certain Mirali Cherkiss Suleiman Bey, later a Pasha. Although he was about 40 he was there as a student, since he could neither read nor write. He had asked permission of the Sultan to be allowed to attend the Royal School and, at first, took his lessons with the youngest children. He persevered and eventually learnt to read and write.

Schooldays

One day a most amusing incident occurred. *Lala* Houched Bey, a Circassian, was very severe and had threatened Suleiman Bey by saying: "If you do not learn your lessons properly I will punish you." As it happened he had not prepared his lessons on that day, and the teacher complained about him. So the *lala* brought him to our room and said: "Princes, I have told Suleiman Bey over and over again to prepare his lessons, and then I definitely said that if he did not learn them I would thrash him. He has not prepared his lessons to-day, so bring the *Falaka* (birch)."

He was placed on the floor and the birch was brought. Abdul Mejid Effendi and myself were ordered to hold him down. Both of us got hold of him, laughing and enjoying the joke. Poor Suleiman Bey! He was made an example in front of us all. He took off his big top boots; we passed the frame over his feet and then the *lala* administered a sound thrashing. Then, like a soldier, he got up, salaamed, withdrew, and we all laughed. We admired the way in which he had behaved and always respected him. He was well-bred, an excellent horseman and could perform many tricks on his horse.

Among our teachers were a Frenchman, Emile Feradi, who came once a week, and the German General Goltz Pasha, who had newly arrived. The head was *lala* Houched Bey, a straightforward man but very strict, whom I respected with all my heart.

The lessons at the school were held at regular times and, during our recreational periods, we would go out in the garden. We all said the midday and afternoon prayers together, and the muezzins who intoned them had splendid voices. Sometimes the Sultan's band would come and play. The gardens were very beautiful, especially in the spring. Both in summer and winter we were obliged to spend two hours in the garden every day when we played, walked or slept as we chose, and then, towards evening, the carriages would arrive to take each one back to his own palace.

When I returned from school one day and went as usual into the presence of my grandfather he said to me: "If you do not go straight to school in the mornings, I will send you back to Mecca." These were the only angry words I ever had from him, and they distressed me deeply; more so as I could not understand. Later on, I heard that my uncles had been telling stories about me.* I felt it deeply, and for ten days was so sad that I did not enter the presence of my grandfather. Then one day he came early to my room and, caressing me, caused me to awake. In a flash I awoke. He merely said: "You

* These uncles were scarcely older than Ali Haider, and were jealous of their father's affection for their nephew.

A Prince of Arabia

are late. Are you well and comfortable?" I kissed his hands, and began once more to enter his presence every day.

For two years Ali Haider continued at the school at Haji Hussein Bagh, and then an order came from the Sultan that the school was to be moved to Yildiz Palace, where a building had been specially prepared for the purpose. Abdul Hamid had now made Yildiz his permanent residence, and had enlarged a comparatively small house built by his predecessors into a spacious palace. He had done this by ruthlessly appropriating houses and grounds belonging to his subjects. On every point of vantage he had built a chalet, or kiosk, and lofty walls encircled the whole enclosure. In order to render Yildiz strong against attack he had cleared away whole streets of houses, and established guards with powerful telescopes at each kiosk. It was therefore inevitable that the young princes should find less freedom in the new premises. Altogether, including the ladies of the *harem* and their attendants, there were said to be nearly 5,000 persons resident within the enclosure, while adjoining it there were 7,000 of the Imperial Guard. So far as Abdul Hamid was concerned, Yildiz was at once a fortress and a prison which was locked on the inside.

His subjects saw him but rarely, and practically the only opportunity he gave them was during his weekly *Selamlık*. This, the term used to designate the men's quarters in a Moslem household, was also the name given to the ceremony associated with the Sultan's visit to the mosque every Friday. It was a great occasion, coloured by oriental splendour, and many tourists would endeavour to get a permit for the enclosure near the palace gates reserved for special visitors. Each visitor was closely scrutinized, and the different embassies to which they belonged had to guarantee their integrity. From the palace to the mosque at the bottom of the slope on which Yildiz was built, the route would be lined with troops magnificently attired, and companies of Albanians and Circassians stood by to escort His Majesty on his Imperial way. Court officials in their long-tailed, gold-embroidered coats, and covered in decorations, stood in a group near the palace gates, where many carriages were assembled under the strictest

supervision. On either side of the well-guarded route the land had been cleared of buildings, so as to provide greater security for the suspicious Sultan.

Before the actual hour of prayer, court carriages carrying the ladies of the household would be seen unobtrusively climbing down the slope from the palace, their occupants in bright long capes, heavily veiled with white muslin head-dresses surmounted by small coloured, jewelled turbans. At the steps of the mosque, the Minister of Evkaf (Pious Foundations) waited with the Sheikh-ul-Islam and other members of the Moslem hierarchy. The crowds would be strangely silent—waiting. Then, at a given moment, the hour of prayer would strike, the great iron gates of the palace would swing back with a metallic clatter, and the Imperial Carriage, drawn by four horses and escorted by riders in gay uniforms and bright silk sashes, would rattle over the uneven road between the groups of grave officials making their obeisance. Not a sound would be heard; not a single voice raised in a cheer, and scarcely a movement would be made by the crowd as the magnificent horses trotted down the hill. Inside the carriage would be seen the humped short man with the dark, pointed beard and piercing eye; yet full of dignity and mysterious power—Sultan Abdul Hamid—the ruler who held much of the world's policy in his hands, revered and feared by Moslems from the shores of Africa to Further India, whose name was respected by followers of the Faith in every corner of the world. He would be almost motionless, save for a quick glance at the terrace and enclosure for special visitors, and an occasional slight movement of the hand. Sitting on the seat opposite him would be his favourite Ghazi, Osman Pasha of Balkan fame, to whose sons he subsequently gave in marriage two of his daughters.

On arrival at the mosque, attendants would hurry to let down the steps of the carriage, and the Minister of Evkaf would advance to greet and escort the Caliph to the massive doorway. As the Sultan entered the mosque the cry would ring out: "Long live the Sultan!" This was followed by a reminder from the Imam: "Humble thyself, O Padishah, and remember that Allah is greater than thou." Did Abdul Hamid ever take this warning to heart? On conclusion of

A Prince of Arabia

the prayers the Sultan, escorted as before, would return to his carriage, giving here and there a slight salutation to some favoured person. As the Imperial Carriage moved off up the hill it would be followed by the elder sons on horseback and the younger ones in carriages. Fat Pashas would jump on their horses in the rear, and others would run panting up the slope in an endeavour to keep pace with their Imperial Master.

The only other occasion on which Abdul Hamid showed himself to his subjects was on the annual pilgrimage to the *Hirker Sheref* (Prophet's mantle), when tradition and Moslem opinion required him to venerate the sacred relics of the Prophet in the palace near the Old Seraglio on the other side of the Golden Horn. Had he been able to do so the Sultan would have avoided even this appearance in public, as he was in constant dread of assassination. As it was, the most elaborate precautions were taken. The distance he had to travel was about two miles and he had the choice of three routes, all of which were carefully prepared. Objectionable houses were thoroughly examined; all places behind which an enemy could hide, carefully guarded; soldiers lined the streets. Until Abdul Hamid was ready to start on this ceremonial visit, which took place on the 15th day of Ramadan, no one knew by which route he intended to go. It was an unkingly spectacle, unworthy of a man who claimed descent from Mohammed, The Conqueror.

The Sultan was welcomed at his destination by the same formula used for the Friday *Selamlık*, and was escorted to the chamber where the *Hirker Sheref* lay. He would then mount a raised dais with the Princes and Damads (sons-in-law) on one hand, his Ministers on the other with the Grand Vizier, the Sheikh-ul-Islam and the most distinguished Shereefs. On the immediate right of the Sultan stood the senior Guardian of the Relics with upraised arms, holding from each white squares of muslin on which verses of the Koran, stamped in black, were impressed. Behind this official stood the Hassiné Mudir, the Harem Sheref Mudir and a number of attendants each holding two similar squares of muslin. Before the Sultan, on a raised stand, was a golden casket, about fifteen inches square and as deep, with its lid open. Inside were numerous

wrappings of silk, one covering another, and the innermost enclosing the Holy Relic—the remains of the Prophet's mantle. Very few have ever seen the actual mantle, which is no robe of state but made of simple cloth.

After prayers had been intoned, the Sultan would take the squares of muslin, one by one, from the raised arms of the official at his side who would be kept supplied by the attendants. As he took each square he would pass it over the open mouth of the golden casket and hand it to each privileged guest present. The recipient would kiss it, press it to his forehead and then, salaaming deeply, retire backwards to allow the next to get in position for the sacred gift. In later years the Shereef Ali Haider would always keep his square of muslin wrapped round his copy of the Koran. Each morning he unwound the muslin, laid it at his side while he read his daily portion, and then reverently wrapped it round again. Whenever he acquired a new one, he gave the worn-out piece, still treasured in the eyes of the Faithful, to one of his own people who had faith and kept the Ramadan fast.

On conclusion of the weekly *Selamlik* the young Princes and Ali Haider would often drive to the Sweet Waters of Europe at the head of the Golden Horn, where they would sometimes picnic or shoot. Life for the young Shereef, at this time, was pleasant. Every winter the family of the Emir would move from his *yali* at Kanlijah over to the big *konak* at Toushan Tash on the European side of the Bosphorus. Ali Haider loved this magnificent establishment which was a real Mussulman home and, as he records, worthy of a great Emir.

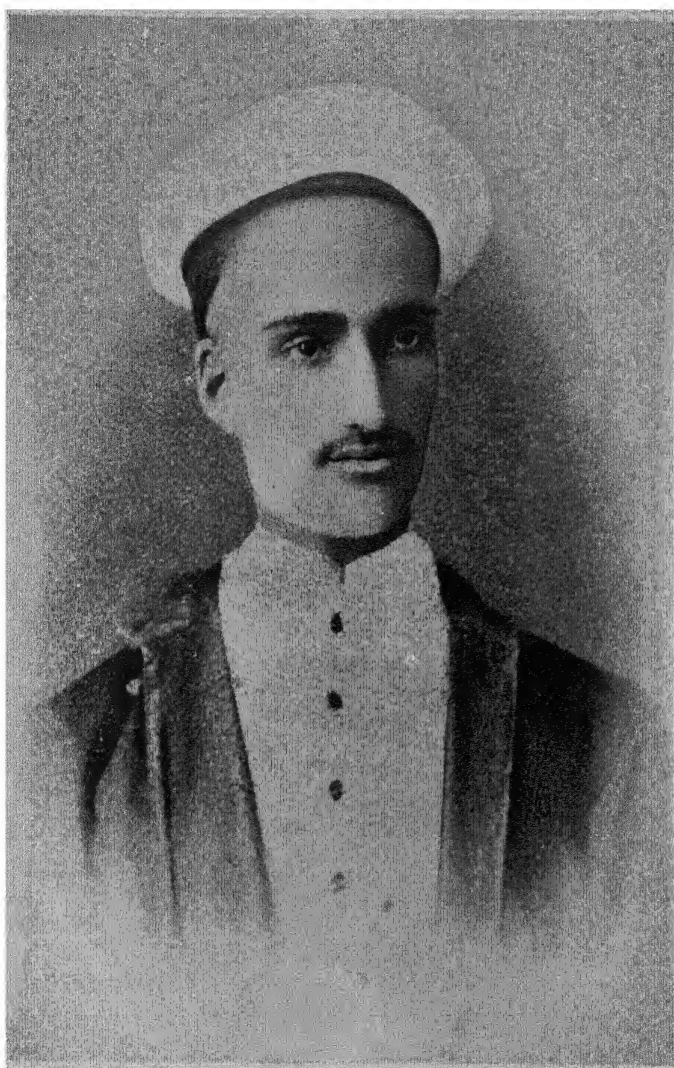
Stamboul has always been notorious for the devastating fires which have swept the city from time to time, and laid waste great areas. They have been more destructive, both because of the inflammable material with which the closely packed houses were built, and the inadequacy of the fire-fighting apparatus. The arrangement for the summoning of the fire brigade was as follows: official watchmen were stationed on two towers, one in Galata and the other in Stamboul. By day they would signal by flags, and at night by lanterns. When fire broke out the watchmen would organize gangs of nearly naked men who would rush through the streets with a hand-

A Prince of Arabia

pump. Few buildings escaped the ravages of fire and the *konak* of the Grand Shereef was no exception.

One day when every one had gone to bed the *konak* was filled with smoke, and I woke up feeling suffocated. I hurried to my grandfather's quarters but, he not being there, I tried to go to the *selamlık*. Smoke, however, made passage quite impossible. At last, from a lower story, I managed to pass through the *marbein* into the hall of the *selamlık* where every one had gathered, and where the men were trying to pull down the balcony. We sent word to the fire brigade. "We see no fire," they replied, and would not come. The people of the house, neighbours, and at length the fire brigade assembled, and the salon from which the smoke appeared was finally isolated from the remainder of the building. Presently flames broke out and then, and only then, did the fire brigade begin to work. Fortunately there were forty fountains in the *konak* and immense cisterns, so there was plenty of water available. The fire was at last extinguished, and every one felt exhausted. That venerable personality, my grandfather, stayed until the end, and it was as if he, by his very presence, prevented the fire growing further.

The next day many called, including the Principal Equerry of the Sultan, Halib Pasha, to offer His Majesty's congratulations on our escape. It was his great regret that the house should have been nearly burnt before he could pay a visit which he had promised. Later, the Sultan sent word that he would pay a visit when the cold weather had gone. Time passed, but he never came—an empty compliment consisting only of words.



Shereef Ali Jabir, Father of Ali Haider

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FINAL EMIRATE OF ABDUL MUTTALIB

THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE OF THIS PERIOD the Emir had been watching events in the Hedjaz. His energetic spirit rebelled against inactivity in the comfort and comparative security of Stamboul, with the result that his heart ached for the opportunity to return to the land of his fathers. The quarrels between the Devi-Aouns, who were now in power in Mecca, and the Turkish authorities had reached such a point in the early part of 1880 that Abdul Muttalib considered that his hopes must soon materialize. Inside information prompted him to make the necessary preparations for such an eventuality.

One day the Grand Shereef told my grandmother to arrange for the purchase of all necessary garments for the family in hot weather. So she called her son, Shereef Hashim, told him of his father's order and gave directions about all she wanted. My uncle, Hashim, however, was young and indiscreet and told every one who came to his room in the *selamlık* that we were going to Mecca. Soon the news went round, and the Imam, Mohammed Effendi, hurried to my grandfather, fell at his feet in distress, and cried: "May God be with us, but is your son, Shereef Hashim, joking? Inshallah, my Lord, is it really true that you are going to Mecca?"

Then my grandfather became very angry and realized how the news had been spread. So he sent for Shereef Hashim and said to him: "Are you trying to joke about my going to Mecca? Well, I am not going, and now I will make you realize that you are only a youth."

Shereef Hashim said how sorry he was to have given offence by broadcasting false news, but the Emir was adamant and ordered him to go to Mecca at once. In vain did his friends try their hardest to plead for him, but the Emir only relented to the extent of allowing his family to remain behind. Hashim had to go, and at once.

After Hashim had arrived in Mecca he dreamt a dream. He dreamt

A Prince of Arabia

he saw his father enter the *Harem Sheref* and then hesitate, questioning, before the door. The Caliph Omar then came out and, lifting him up, brought him into the presence of the Holy Prophet. The Prophet was sitting down and, on his head, he wore the turban of our family. He smiled and talked with those on either side of him, while my grandfather was seen to fulfil the rites of pilgrimage. As he left, the Caliph Omar said to him: "Your desire is accomplished. You will return to your own country."

Three months after Shereef Hashim had arrived in Mecca, the Grand Shereef Hussein, who had succeeded Abdullah, was stabbed to death by a Persian.

This murder is described by Charles Doughty, in his inimitable style, as follows. "The Shereef Hussein was stabbed in the bowels at half past six o'clock in the morning of the 14th March, 1880, as he entered Jidda by one disguised as a Persian dervish. The wounded Prince was borne into his agent's house; and, in the next hours, feeling himself little the worse, he made light of his hurt; and sent comfortable tidings of his state to the great ones and to his kindred in Stamboul. But an intestinal hæmorrhage clotted in the bowel, and Hussein, who lived through the night, was dying towards morning; and he deceased peaceably at ten o'clock in the arms of his physician. The assassin, who had been snatched by the police-soldiery from the fury of the people, was cast into prison, but nothing is known of his examination. Yet it is whispered among the Ottoman officers that the Shereef had been murdered *because he favoured the Engleys*."

The reason given by Doughty for this murder is suggestive in the light of subsequent events.

The news was telegraphed to my grandfather from Suakin by his agent, Farsan Amazi, who added: "Go to Abdul Hamid and ask for the Emirate of Mecca yourself." My grandfather agreed, and drove next day to the Imperial Palace. On the way he met an equerry of the Sultan who told him that His Majesty wished to see him and, further on, he met another equerry with a similar message. So the Emir came to Yildiz Palace, where he was received by the Sultan and offered the Emirate of Mecca for the third time.

He stayed with the Sultan for the evening meal and returned after nightfall. At home the family were anxious about his late return,

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

but when at length he did arrive he came straight into the *harem*. Every one was most anxious to hear the news, and I was told to go and ask. I hesitated; then an order came from my grandfather to say that he wanted me, and I ran to his quarters. He was performing his ablutions prior to the evening prayer. "My son," he said, "we are going to Mecca, but you will remain here. I leave you, my son, in the care of the Sultan."

It would appear that the Sultan Abdul Hamid desired Ali Haider to remain at Constantinople, both as a surety for the loyalty of his grandfather and in order that he, a prospective Shereef of Mecca, should be brought up in, and thoroughly imbued with, Turkish ideas.

The first news delighted me, but I was most disappointed at being left behind. On the other hand, I did not want to leave my school. My grandfather called his son, Shereef Fahad, and told us both to tell the family, and all our friends, the news. On the next day our home presented rather a humorous appearance, for there seemed no place for the family to rest because of the enormous number of visitors who called. How strange is Fate that, in moments of prosperity, numerous friends and helpers should appear; yet, in moments of distress, friends are often hard to find! This confusion in the house continued right up to the time when the family had to leave.

It was a lovely day in March (1880), when my grandfather rode on horseback in procession to the Government offices at Bab Ali where the Sultan's proclamation was read. Although almost ninety years of age he looked very young on horseback, and every one was astonished at his appearance. He wore no uniform but, over his robes, he wore his *abbas*, and round his neck the Grand Cordon of the Order of Osmanieh with which the Sultan had that day invested him. After his return to the *konak* he paid a ceremonial call on the Sultan, again escorted by a large and picturesque procession.

Some days later the Sultan's own special yacht was suitably prepared and placed at the disposal of the Emir. On the day of his embarkation he first went to Yildiz Palace to bid farewell to the Sultan, and thence to Haji Hussein Bagh where the Royal Princes were assembled to say good-bye. We waited to receive him in the yacht, to which he was pulled in the Sultan's five-oared caique, with the Ghazi Osman Pasha sitting opposite.

A large crowd came to the ship: many of them we knew and many we had never seen before. All bade him God-speed, and at

A Prince of Arabia

last the moment came for us to say good-bye. My time arrived. I went into the saloon and kissed his feet. "Ah, Haider!" was all he said. My uncle, Shereef Fahad, and I then left together.

Kibrishi Kamel Effendi also went in to say good-bye, but grandfather said to him: "Kamel Effendi, you are coming with me." The man was astonished, but he just sent word to his family and, as he stood, obeyed the order of the Emir without demur. He had always appeared to be faithful, honest and self-sacrificing and had, at that time, much love for the House of the Prophet with a special devotion for my grandfather. He was later to betray him.

That night our *konak* felt very cold and empty.

But let me follow the fortunes of my grandfather. He arrived at Yenbo early in April, and thence proceeded straight to Medina. Great receptions awaited him, and many tribes came to pay homage and swear loyalty to him. During his stay in Medina the Grand Shereef visited the Tomb of the Prophet, where he took part in the customary rites and, after several days, returned to Yenbo and, thence, embarked for Jeddah.

Now my father, Shereef Jabir, had been acting as *vekil* for the Emir, and all the people with whom he had dealings were contented and had much respect for the impartiality of his justice. Among the tribes it had been a commonplace to say in a dispute: "I will tell Jabir." They invariably accepted his decisions. But now he had become very ill and only by a great effort was he able to meet his father at Jeddah where an enormous gathering of people had assembled to welcome the Grand Shereef. Never had such a reception been seen in the country.

When the ship arrived, my grandfather enquired after his son from among those who came on board, and they replied that he had been so overworked that he had been unable to come off to the ship. When eventually the Grand Shereef saw him after he had landed, he was shocked at his appearance, and later, when they reached Mecca, ordered him to return by the same ship to Stamboul. So, with his own family, the Doctor Ibrahim Bey and Kamel Effendi, my father departed; but three days after he reached Stamboul he died suddenly and was buried in the large Turkish cemetery at Scutari. My grief was inconsolable, and for many days I could bring myself to speak to no one.

Both in Stamboul and in Mecca my father had served the Grand Shereef faithfully, and earned his blessing. To this day his name is honoured in Mecca for the work he did for our people. Had he lived he would assuredly have succeeded my grandfather in Mecca. He

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

was handsome, wise, discreet and high-souled. Poor father! he died so young; he was scarcely forty!

The loss of my father, intensified by the recent death of another son, was a severe shock to my grandfather. How could he have any spirit left with no one near to help except widowed wives and fatherless children! Then, in Stamboul, both his youngest son, Shereef Fahad, and another grandson, Musaad, lived a worthless and selfish existence, and the family became riven with dissension. Shereef Ahmed Adnan, his eldest living son, fled from Mecca to Ibn Rashid, thence to Damascus and Stamboul where he thought only of his own interest and became steeped in intrigue. This son never had the blessing of his father.

But through all this trouble my grandfather seemed to derive spiritual exultation, and even Kamel Effendi told stories of his goodness and greatness. Yet, alone as my grandfather was, and surrounded by mischievous people who intrigued on behalf of the Devi-Aouns both in Mecca and Stamboul, he maintained good government. Our real friends seemed to become fewer and fewer.

On the reinstatement of Abdul Muttalib as Grand Shereef of Mecca, members of the House of Devi-Aoun became united in one object—to regain the Emirate for their own family. The Sultan was all-powerful, and therefore their first consideration was to ingratiate themselves in his eyes, and make out how much better and more reliable they were than any of the House of Devi-Zeyd. So all the important Shereefs of the temporarily dispossessed dynasty returned to Stamboul, loaded with gifts and money, in order to fawn at the feet of their autocratic Sultan. Among them were Abdillah and Ali; also Hussein who was to hold the Emirate during the first World War, adopt the title of King of the Hedjaz, and even arrogate to himself the Caliphate.

At first they failed in their intentions with the Sultan in spite of their agreeable manners, so they turned their attention to foreign embassies, in particular the British, to see what support they could obtain from those quarters. Such activities soon came to the ears of Abdul Hamid through the perusal of his 'journals,' or reports from spies. He was furious, and ordered his Secretary to issue the following *iradé* to the Grand Shereef

A Prince of Arabia

Abdul Muttalib in Mecca: "If the Shereefs Abdillah, Hussein, Ali and Mohammed wish to keep on good terms with me, they should fish in healthier waters. These men are to leave the country and return forthwith to Mecca."

Although this announcement came as a heavy blow to them, as it upset their plans for further intrigues in Turkey, they were not disheartened, and prepared other schemes for the overthrow of Abdul Muttalib as soon as they returned to Mecca. Ali Haider, however, records:

My grandfather, out of the greatness of his heart, showed them much kindness and consideration and gave them full permission to receive their own friends and followers as they pleased. But, in the words of the Koran: *If you show kindness to an evil nature he abuses your consideration.* They continued to intrigue against my grandfather and performed many acts of treachery.

Meanwhile, in Stamboul, the atmosphere of suspicion with which Abdul Hamid surrounded himself grew thicker and deprived him often of common sense. Suspicion bred fear, and fear bred hate, with the result that those with whom he had even the slightest disagreement soon found themselves objects of his hate and insatiable cruelty. The slightest mention of reform roused in him a fury of passion, and those who had placed him on the throne as a reformer were now to receive the full blast of his suspicious and treacherous nature. The circumstances of his accession will be remembered. The Sultan never forgave Midhat Pasha for his attempt to establish Constitutional Government and, until the time of his death, he treated him with remarkable vindictiveness. For three or four years he had been left unmolested, although he had not been permitted to reside in the Capital, but early in 1881 a charge was formulated against Midhat by Abdul Hamid to the effect that he had been responsible for the murder of Sultan Abdul Aziz. This was ridiculous because it had been proved, without a shadow of doubt, that Abdul Aziz had committed suicide a few days after his deposition. But, among those in Abdul Hamid's entourage, it was no difficult matter to find men sufficiently despicable to state, with the promise of bribes, that they had murdered Abdul Aziz on instructions from Midhat.

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

So, when the outside world had almost forgotten the incident of the suicide of Abdul Aziz, it was startled by the news that Midhat, with Hairulla Effendi and Damad Mahmoud, together with a wrestler and gardener attached to the palace, had been suddenly arrested and were to be put on trial for the murder of their Sovereign. The conduct of the Court was a farce, and judgment was delivered on the 30th June 1881. The accused were all sentenced to death, but the gardener and the wrestler, the tools of Abdul Hamid, who were alleged to have committed the actual murder, were released and lived in comfort for the rest of their lives on the bribes they had accepted.

So much pressure was then brought to bear on Abdul Hamid by almost every Power in Europe that he was constrained to reduce the sentence from death to one of banishment in Arabia, where he hoped they would soon be quietly put to death. Leading the Powers in their protests to the Sultan was Great Britain, where the question had been brought up in both Houses of Parliament, and both parties had used their influence to save Midhat's life. Probably no act by the Powers was so resented by Abdul Hamid as this interference between him and his intended victim, and his vindictiveness over this question was specially directed towards England.

The arrival in Jeddah of Midhat Pasha and his fellow reformers placed the Grand Shereef in a difficult position. He knew that it was the desire of the Sultan that he should not only imprison them, but also have them secretly murdered at the first opportunity. Towards Midhat he had always been friendly, and had sympathized with his ideals for the reform of Turkish administration. It was therefore impossible for him to obey the Sultan's commands. On the other hand, if he refused he would not only incur Imperial displeasure and the possible loss of the Emirate, but would also lay himself open to the accusation that he was in league with the British, who had championed, so valiantly, the cause of Midhat.

The character of Abdul Muttalib, however, was strong enough not to betray his conscience, even if it meant the ultimate loss of all that he held most dear in this life. He imprisoned Midhat, it is true, but he saw that he and his

A Prince of Arabia

friends enjoyed every comfort and consideration. Details of this treatment are recorded by the Shereef Ali Haider.

When Midhat and his friends arrived, my grandfather received them at the gate of his palace at Behadieh and, out of sorrow, he wept. To Midhat Pasha he said : " When you worked for the deposition of Abdul Aziz and tried to enlist my support, I made out that I was unwell. Now this is the result of your action."

Nevertheless my grandfather had a warm personal regard for Midhat Pasha and, during his imprisonment, did everything possible to care for his health and comfort as well as that of his fellow prisoners. For this solicitude and kindness of heart he was to suffer cruelly. It gave the Devi-Aouns the opportunity they wanted to disseminate false news about him which soon got to the ears of the Sultan. Abdul Hamid was incensed at the gentle treatment that was being accorded to his prisoners, and his suspicious nature quickly swallowed the idea—insidiously suggested—that the Grand Shereef was in league with the British.

The Sultan grew more furious as further reports were received, and his suspicions were increased by false information consistently spread by Hussein and other members of the family of Devi-Aoun. So disturbed did he become at the thought of the Grand Shereef using Midhat Pasha as a means of gaining favour with the British and allowing their influence to expand, that he summoned a certain Seyid Jezoli, to whom he gave secret instructions to deliver to the Grand Shereef in Mecca. A few weeks later, therefore, Seyid Jezoli appeared at the Court of the Emir to whom he gave the Sultan's salaams and said : " I have brought with me secret instructions from His Majesty the Sultan to the effect that you are to arrange that Midhat Pasha and Damad Mahmoud Pasha are put to death."

" Never will I do such a thing," replied my grandfather haughtily. " If they are to be killed, kill them ; but I, at my age, intend to keep my hands clean of murder."

" If you obey the Sultan's commands," continued the Seyid, " he promises that the Emirate of Mecca will remain in your hands and in those of your family. He will imprison, or put away, those members of the House of Devi-Aoun who are intriguing against you, and will grant any wish you may ask."

But the Grand Shereef only answered : " Let the Sultan know that I intend to do no harm to Midhat Pasha and his friends."

Thus my grandfather kept his honour and self-respect. Seyid Jezoli then performed the rites of pilgrimage but, before he went

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

away, again sought an audience with the Grand Shereef. "I repeat the commands of the Sultan," he said. "If you do not obey I can only prophesy for you an evil and unpleasant future." But my grandfather was not to be moved in his determination. "Condemn them if you like," he said, "but I will not be their hangman."

So Seyid Jezoli returned to Turkey and misfortune began to gather round my grandfather, whose personal friendship for Midhat Pasha, who had been a close neighbour of his in Stamboul, could not be shaken by the Sultan's threat. This was the opportunity for the Devi-Aouns to strengthen their position, and they were not slow to take advantage of it. To the Turks they promised everything, and Aoun-er-Refik in Stamboul worked and intrigued for the rapid deposition of the Emir Abdul Muttalib.

Meanwhile Osman Pasha was sent to Mecca as military commander of the Hedjaz, where Abdillah-ibn-Aoun was hoping and working to supersede my grandfather. Abdillah disbursed much money in the furtherance of his schemes, and most of this money found its way into the pockets of Osman Pasha, who associated himself with the ambitions of Abdillah and his family. Osman Pasha eventually felt himself in a strong enough position to assert his authority with the Grand Shereef to such an extent that a breach rapidly formed between them, and my grandfather considered it would be more discreet to retire for a while to his palace at Taif in the mountains. He felt, and knew, that he was surrounded by spies and that there were few, even in his own household, whom he could trust.

At Taif, however, he could not escape. The breach between Osman Pasha and himself broke out into open rupture until, at length, the Turkish commander, doubtless with support from Stamboul, surrounded his palace, told my grandfather he was deposed and a prisoner, and that the Emirate of Mecca had passed into the hands of Shereef Abdillah-ibn-Aoun. As my grandfather was anxious to avoid any bloodshed, he resigned himself to his fate with patience, obeyed their instructions, bore with their insults and accepted his imprisonment in the *Kirk Yumly Kale* (forty-windowed fortress) as the will of God.

In *The Life of Midhat Pasha* written by his son, Ali Haider Midhat Bey, reference is made to the deposition of Abdul Muttalib in the following extract:

The Duke of Sutherland passed through Smyrna on his way to Constantinople, and went to visit the family of Midhat in order to assure them that he would do his

A Prince of Arabia

utmost to persuade the Sultan to give Midhat Pasha his liberty. Lord Dufferin then made representations to the Turkish Government and charged the Dragoman belonging to the British Consulate at Jeddah to procure news of Midhat's health from the Grand Shereef of Mecca. The Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib assured the Dragoman that Midhat was perfectly well.

The Sultan, however, terrified at the relations between the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib and the British Dragoman, accused the former of holding secret parleys with England in order to save Midhat, and combine with him against the person of the Sultan. He therefore deposed him and threw him into a fortress at Taif. This is why Midhat, unaware of the real reason, wrote as follows to his family in a letter dated 2nd September 1882:

“Two days ago a very strange event occurred. At midnight on the 30th August, the house of the Emir of Mecca, Shereef Abdul Muttalib, who was residing at Taif, was suddenly surrounded by four companies of infantry and four guns: then at daybreak he was torn from his bed and conducted to the fortress where we are imprisoned. He has been succeeded by Shereef Abdillah, and it is believed that Abdul Muttalib will be sent to Constantinople or elsewhere, as he is accused of having kept up a correspondence with the British. We must deeply pity his fate when we think of his great age, and his descent from the Prophet.”

Although Abdillah had assumed the Emirate of Mecca with the support of Osman Pasha, his elder brother, Aoun-er-Refik, had meanwhile been proclaimed Grand Shereef in Stamboul. When the news was received, Abdillah, badly shaken, was forced to return to Stamboul and his brother arrived in Mecca. Abdillah remained in Stamboul as a member of the State Council, and was given the rank of Vizier.

With the fall of my grandfather the lives of Midhat Pasha and his friends became most precarious and, shortly afterwards, on 26th July 1883, they were strangled. The relief to the Sultan was great, but in order to make certain they really were dead he despatched a special

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

investigator from Stamboul.* There are many, however, who accuse my grandfather of having been implicated in their murder when, in reality, his care and solicitude for them was the primary cause of his own eventual discomfiture. But he could bear his troubles with fortitude in the knowledge that his conscience was clear before his God. Those on whose conscience lies guilt must for ever be ashamed before God, and those who bear false witness and lie must ever tremble and fear in the presence of the Most High. God is good, God is generous.

To those concerned at the time it therefore appeared as though Abdul Muttalib had been deposed because of his refusal to strangle Midhat Pasha. This, in fact, was not quite the case. Abdul Hamid had a great respect for the old Emir, he was one of the few men in whose loyalty he trusted, and it is probable that the question of Midhat could have been explained away without the Sultan taking the drastic action he did. It was known that one thing, and one thing only, would cause the Sultan to dispossess the Grand Shereef, and that would be proof positive that he was intriguing with his arch-enemy, Great Britain. The insidious suggestions, cleverly spread by members of the family of Devi-Aoun, that Abdul Muttalib refused to have Midhat killed because of a secret agreement he had made with the British, did not convince even the suspicious Sultan. Proof was necessary.

The young Shereefs of the House of Devi-Aoun and rivals of Abdul Muttalib had more money than conscience, and it was no difficult matter for them to enlist, with the help of heavy bribes, the support of the *Wali*, Osman Pasha, with whom the Grand Shereef had already fallen out over some petty arrogance on the part of the Turk. Together they hatched a plot that sounds almost fantastic. With great cunning they introduced into their schemes a certain Hassan Lama of Medina, who was the confidential secretary of the Grand Shereef and kept his seal. With the promise of reward, they prevailed on him to stamp some paper with the official seal of the Emir and, on the sheets obtained, a letter was written to the British Government requesting them to place the Holy

* According to Ali Haider Midhat Bey, Midhat's body was dug up, the head cut off and sent to Abdul Hamid at Yildiz in a box labelled: "*Ivoires Japonnaises, objets d'art. Pour S.M. le Sultan.*"

A Prince of Arabia

Cities under the protection of Great Britain. The letter was dispatched, and arrangements made for its interception before it reached the British Consul in Jeddah. Once in the hands of Osman Pasha, he felt that he could take drastic action against the Grand Shereef.

Years afterwards—in 1923—the Ferashi Vekil of Mecca, Abou Saoud, related to Ali Haider the part he had played in this drama as an official attached to the court of the Sultan. “With the co-operation of Shereef Hussein,” he said, “the *Wali* then surrounded the palace of the old Emir and announced his deposition. The Grand Shereef inquired the reason, but was merely told that they were acting under superior orders. He was sent to Taif under arrest. Shereef Abdillah-ibn-Aoun was then proclaimed Emir, and the details of the whole affair were sent to Stamboul. The Sultan Abdul Hamid doubted the authenticity of the letter when it was shown to him, and said that the Emir was a religious man who would not dream of placing the Holy Cities under the protection of Christians. He added that he was certain the whole affair was the result of a base intrigue, and he sent for Shereef Fahad, the youngest son of the Emir then living in Stamboul, and also Shereef Musaad, a grandson.* They were shown the seal. ‘Yes, it is our father’s,’ they declared. Still the Sultan doubted. ‘He is a religious man,’ he repeated, ‘and I am certain some intrigue has taken place. Let Abou Saoud Effendi proceed forthwith to the Hedjaz, and carry out a thorough investigation.’

“The First Secretary then gave me two letters; one for the *Wali*, Osman Pasha, and the other for the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib. My arrival in Jeddah caused surprise, as I had only left for Stamboul a few months before, but I lost no time in proceeding to Mecca where I gave the *Wali* the letter addressed to him. He was angry and, when I wanted to proceed to Taif, I found I was forbidden. I then discovered that the envelope containing the letter to the Grand Shereef had been opened and its contents extracted. A telegram was shown me, supposed to have originated from the Sultan,

* It is strange that the Sultan never sent for the other grandson, Ali Haider who, at the time, was kept in complete ignorance of the whole affair.

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

in which it was announced that he had appointed Aoun-er-Refik and a committee, of which I was a member, to elucidate the whole question.

“After a few days’ delay we proceeded to Behadieh Palace where we entered the presence of the aged Emir who welcomed me as an old friend. He was shown the letter he was alleged to have written to the British Government, and asked what he had to say. In reply the old man uncovered his head and cursed Osman Pasha, Hussein and Abdullah. Then, weeping, he passed into another room. ‘Have you nothing to say?’ he was asked. ‘My tears are sufficient,’ he replied, ‘to show that it is all a lie.’ The Committee eventually came to the conclusion that the letter was a fabrication, but other influences were so strong that, instead of being reinstated, the Grand Shereef Abdul Muttalib was merely allowed to live in Mecca with a salary of £500 a month.”

Thus the family of Devi-Aoun, a junior branch of Shereefs, regained the Emirate and held it until their overthrow by the Wahhabi Emir, Ibn Saoud, in 1925. It must have seemed ironical that this selfsame Hussein, who took such an active part in accusing Abdul Muttalib of relationship with Great Britain, should himself, during the first World War, have supported the British forces against the Turks. What a powerful handle for intrigue the accusation of friendship with Great Britain has always been throughout the East! It always will be. Speaking of Hussein to Ali Haider in 1923, Abou Saoud added: “The offence of which he accused your grandfather he has himself committed. He made war on Islam, he was a rebel and accepted the protection of the British.”

The record of Ali Haider continues:

Osman Pasha received no blessing for his share in this despicable affair, for he eventually became paralysed and had to endure many years of physical suffering. With his bodily infirmities, remorse assailed him, and he confessed everything to my aunt in the Palace of Gerara saying: “I intrigued and plotted against your father for personal wealth and that, I am certain, is the cause of my present physical condition. May I have your forgiveness.”

Meanwhile my grandfather was held a prisoner until his death, but the respect which the Sultan had always shown towards him per-

A Prince of Arabia

mitted his release from the fortress in Taif and allowed him to be confined, instead, in his own Palace of Behadieh close to Mecca. There he ended his days and, in 1884, at a great age, he suddenly passed away to the God whom he had served so faithfully.

Few men could ever hope to equal the saintliness of his character, but there were many privileged to share and appreciate some of the beauty that emanated from his personality. One such man was Ibrahim Karamé, very learned and a poet. He and I once walked together in our grounds at Kanlijah, and were discussing education when I ventured to suggest what an excellent idea it would be to build a Moslem university at Taif. There the climate would be healthy and the proximity to Mecca would add to its value and enhance its reputation.

He was delighted at my suggestion and said: "God has disclosed to me what is in your mind. May He bring to pass what you wish."

His father had written a poem on my grandfather and, because of this, his son Ibrahim was anxious to visit him and had come to Stamboul for this purpose. But, since he was a Christian, he was doubtful whether such an audience would be granted. So, one Bairam day, he came to the *konak* and was asked who it was he wanted to see. "The Great Master," replied Karamé, who was then directed to the *selamlık*. Thither he went, and again the question: "Whom seekest thou?"

"Saidna, the King," said Karamé.

"You will be welcome upstairs," was the reply.

He was then taken upstairs, and yet again the question: "Whom do you want?" He told them, and was ushered into a large room where many were sitting, being told by a slave: "You are welcome; enter." Thus he came into the presence of my grandfather and, after the customary greetings had passed, he sat down in a secluded corner. There were several ulema present, and a discussion was in progress about our Lord the Prophet and at what age he began to prophesy. One said at forty, but Karamé, from his corner, quoted the Koran, saying: "I was a Prophet when Adam was between the sea and the mud."

Then my grandfather called and said: "Come, Karamé. Come to a higher seat." So Karamé moved out from his corner and sat nearer to the Grand Shereef. The Emir then asked him about himself, whence he had come and when he had arrived, so that Karamé was astonished. He had never seen the saintly Emir before, and did not know how he could possibly be aware of his name, as he had not given it. He stayed long, and when all had gone away, he kissed the

The Final Emirate of Abdul Muttalib

hands and feet of the Emir, and enquired how he knew who he was.

"I knew you from the likeness to your father whom I loved," replied the Emir. "Your voice so resembles his that, as soon as you began to speak, his voice came to my ears and I called you Karamé."

Thenceforth, from time to time, Karamé came to visit us, and when my grandfather was deposed and cast into prison he recited the following words :

When power, intrigue, and greed are combined,
When Rulers are flattered, or incited to crime ;
When Justice's foundations are undermined,
Then the Noble and Just become their victims in time.

When Allah directs the path man should tread,
Then happy, thus ruled, the people or race ;
Then none shall come short of life's joy or bread
For low or highborn will each find his place.



1885-1909

Intrigues for the Emirate of Mecca

Ali Haider's Early Manhood. Marriage

The Struggle for Mecca

The Turkish Revolution and Deposition of Abdul Hamid

Travels in Egypt and Asia Minor

CHAPTER FIVE

EARLY MANHOOD

ALTHOUGH ABDUL MUTTALIB WAS DEAD, Ali Haider still continued to enjoy the privilege of an education with the Imperial Princes in the Palace School. The pride he had in his own distinguished lineage rightly made him feel no inferiority when in company with the Princes, and a story is related of an occasion when he flung the great inkpot across the room at the Sultan's son for daring to joke about the family of the Prophet. When this incident got to the ears of Abdul Hamid, the young Prince was made to apologize to Ali Haider and kiss his hand. Among the Princes, Abdul Mejid Effendi, son of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz, remained his close friend, and it came as a severe blow when Abdul Hamid suddenly gave orders that he and his brothers were to attend school no more. For some years afterwards they were confined to their own palace, and Ali Haider was unable to associate with them again until after the Revolution in 1908.

The way in which the Palace School came to an end is typical of the peculiar methods which characterized Abdul Hamid.

I still attended the Palace School until one day we heard that the Sultan Abdul Hamid was very angry with his eldest son, Prince Selim Effendi. This happened to coincide with the end of term before the Ramadan holidays and, when we broke up, the head said: "After Bairam we will send you word about when you may return."

But Bairam passed and no word was received; so my schooldays ended. I thereupon informed the Palace that I wished to go to Mecca, but I received no answer to my request. I waited for a few weeks and then sought an interview with the First Chamberlain, Hadji Ali Pasha, and enquired why I had received no answer. "Was your relationship with Prince Selim Effendi very friendly?" he asked.

"Naturally," I replied. "Is he not the Sultan's son? Why, therefore, should I not be friendly with him?" But I understood, and realized that the Sultan's anger was still strong and that, because I

A Prince of Arabia

had been friendly with Prince Selim, there was no chance of my request being granted.*

At first Ali Haider continued to live in the big *konak* of his grandfather at Toushan Tash, in company with Shereef Fahad, the youngest son of the old Emir, who was little older than himself. But Fahad was weak, due possibly to his being the youngest in an enormous family; he became seriously ill and died shortly after his father. Ali Haider was thereupon ordered by the Sultan to look after Fahad's wife and family, which responsibility he undertook for several years.

Of the sons of Abdul Muttalib only the least filial, Shereef Ahmed Adnan, was now left. In the previous chapter mention was made of the way in which this son had behaved towards his father, and how he had fled to Damascus and thence to Stamboul. Being older than Ali Jabir, Shereef Ahmed and his family were naturally jealous of the son of his younger brother whom Abdul Muttalib had regarded as his successor, and this jealousy was to follow Ali Haider to the end of his life. When Ahmed returned to Stamboul he established himself in his father's *konak*, as a result of which Ali Haider sought permission from the Sultan to go and live elsewhere. This was granted, and he took a *yali* at Kourchesmi, on the European side of the Bosphorus.

In 1884, just before the death of Abdul Muttalib, Ali Haider received orders from his grandfather to marry. He was barely 18 and was still attending the Palace School, when an agent of the old Emir arrived in Stamboul to deliver the instructions and select a Turkish lady of high standing. The procedure for arranging a marriage of this nature was conducted largely by women, who passed from one *harem* to another, carrying tales about the beauty of the girl or the ability of the boy. If the women were inclined to agree between themselves on the suitability of a certain match, the prospective bride would

* The reason for the Sultan's anger which resulted in the break-up of the Imperial School is typical. Prince Selim was alleged to have had relations with a Circassian slave whom the Sultan regarded as his special property. Abdul Hamid was so furious that he evicted Selim from the Palace, ordering him to establish a household of his own. He further decreed that neither Selim, Mejid nor Ali Haider were ever to see each other again as he feared these powerful princes would intrigue against him. This, however, in no way affected the personal friendship which continued to exist between Ali Haider and Abdul Mejid.

Early Manhood

be introduced into the household of the man and, in place of the usual servant, but heavily veiled, bring in the coffee, or some other refreshment for her future lord. As she performed this service she would be freely criticized by all those who happened to be present; an experience for which the girl must have been thankful for her veil. If this proved satisfactory, the man would send her a jewel in token of acceptance, and visits of courtesy would be exchanged between the agents of the respective parties. The friends and relations of the bride would then adorn the bridal chamber with richly embroidered curtains and bed covers, and arrange for her bridal dress. Invitations would be issued for friends to attend on the appointed day, but this would impose no limitation on the number of visitors, as uninvited guests were expected and even encouraged.

On the great day the bride would sit in state from early morning, and any house where a lady thus waited for her groom would be open to every passer-by of the female sex. They would enter, curtsy to the bride, inspect her bedroom and then squat at one of the long tables which would be loaded with sweetmeats of every description. No one really knew at what hour the bridegroom would appear: his personal inclination determined the auspicious moment so long as it was before nightfall. When he did arrive he would be heralded with the cry: "Behold the Bridegroom." This was the great moment for which all the female visitors had been waiting, and they would now line the way to the bridal chamber. As he passed between their ranks he would receive slaps of encouragement on his back, coupled with words of advice and good wishes from the boldest of the ladies. Thus he entered the room where his bride awaited him. He would advance towards her, lift her veil and gaze upon her face for the first time. Then he would present her with some gift and return to his own home, where he would take his evening meal in the *selaṁlik* with his friends. Not until nightfall would he go and claim his bride.

Five years after his marriage Ali Haider's first son, Abdul Mejid, was born, and he was followed a year later by another son, Mohiddin.

A Prince of Arabia

It was the custom during Ramadan for the Palace and each big establishment to keep open house. This was known as the *Serai Iftar* reception. Visitors were expected without invitation; many stayed all night and hospitality was unlimited. During this season presents of money and clothing would be given to all servants, followers and friends. At the Palace many tables would be prepared, and the First and Second Chamberlains would receive the Sultan's guests, the more important of which, such as the Grand Vizier, Sheikh-ul-Islam and Cabinet Ministers, would attend on the first two or three nights. Each Chamberlain and the Secretary would have funds at their disposal for the important guests, and the Grand Vizier and Sheikh-ul-Islam would probably receive as much as 1,000 gold apiece. These sums of money were given in small red satin bags lined with white, and gilt cords were twisted round the neck.

At one of these receptions at the Palace which the Shereef Ali Haider attended soon after the birth of his first son, he was accosted by the First Chamberlain, Hadji Ali Pasha, who said that the Sultan had appointed Ali Haider a member of the State Council and was conferring on him the decoration of *Imtiaz*. The Shereef was pleased to have something to do and began a regular attendance at the Council. He records, however, that none of the members would ever receive their salaries unless application was constantly made for them. Then the Sultan might issue an order to the Treasury and, if fortunate, two months pay would be forthcoming when that for nine months was due. After a month or two, the order would be forgotten and no more money would be paid.

Gradually Ali Haider lost interest in the proceedings of the Council. No criticism was allowed and no attention was paid to any suggestion; so he decided to stay away. No questions were asked and no one seemed to care whether he was present or not.

As Ali Haider grew older his relations with the Sultan were outwardly proper, but inwardly strained. He never forgot, or forgave, the treatment Abdul Hamid had shown towards his grandfather, and the Sultan, on the other hand, aware that Ali Haider had bitterly resented the deposition of Abdul

Early Manhood

Muttalib, grew suspicious of the Shereef and feared that, if opportunity offered, he would conspire against his person. He therefore took good care to see that no opportunity was offered, and arranged for a strict eye to be kept on all the activities of Ali Haider. Among his 'journals,' therefore, the name of Ali Haider occupied a considerable space, and the Shereef found his personal liberty curtailed to an irritating extent.

I attended the Sultan's receptions at Bairam and, during Ramadan, he sometimes invited me to the special readings of the Koran which were held in his Palace. Apart from that he showed me no other special attention. He knew how much my grandfather had favoured me, and perhaps he felt ashamed when he thought of his own treatment towards him. With a few friends I would go out riding or shooting, and I read much. I went to no public assemblies and busied myself in my duties towards my family. From the view of Abdul Hamid I kept clear.

In spite of many requests, Abdul Hamid persisted in his refusal to allow Ali Haider to go to Mecca, and the Sultan even grew suspicious of those members of the Shereef's family who happened to be in the Hedjaz. Information, for instance, reached the Sultan that Shereef Jaffer, Ali Haider's brother, who had remained in Mecca, had fled to the Imam of Yemen, and he at once suspected him of intrigue. In point of fact, Jaffer had embarked in a ship for Stamboul to join Ali Haider, but the Sultan would not believe this until he was actually produced before him some days later.

The Sultan's suspicions, however, were never allayed; and the Shereef's most innocent actions or friendships were nearly always questioned.

One day when I was visiting Hadji Ali at the Palace he greeted me by saying: "You ride about the country-side a great deal. Where do you go?"

I understood at once that someone must have sent a 'journal' about me because, two days previous, I had ridden farther into the country than usual with some of the Shereefs who lived in Turkey. "Yes," I replied, "I did go for a long ride, but with no strangers. My companions were all Shereefs of my own family. If I am for-

A Prince of Arabia

bidden to see members of my family, say so, and I will then know what action to take. But you must realize this, Pasha: I love riding and I intend to ride every evening. Understand this, also: the people with whom I associate all belong to me; you know them all, and I consider this interference to be quite unnecessary."

Many came to me who were good-hearted and loyal; they were not afraid, their affection was honest, and I valued it greatly. One evening when I was talking with some friends, the conversation turned to Seyid Abdullah, the holy man who had befriended me when I travelled as a small boy from Jeddah to Stamboul. "I hope," I said, "he hears us talking of him and will come." About a month later, in mid-winter, when I entered my house I enquired if there were any visitors.

"Yes, there is somebody upstairs," was the reply.

"Who is he?" I asked.

"We do not know, as it is someone we have not seen before. He wears a white Arab head-dress."

So I went upstairs and found my Seyid awaiting me. My pleasure was great; we kissed and embraced. I knew why he had come, but, nevertheless, enquired. "I just wanted to see you," he said simply. "If there is a boat sailing to-morrow I will depart."

We talked together all night. "Let me see your children," he asked. I had Abdul Mejjid and Mohiddin brought in; he kissed and blessed them both. "There is another," I said, "but she is a very little girl and sleeps." He blessed her also, wrote an amulet for each and, on the following day, departed. I implored him to stay, but my pleadings were useless.

Thus I passed my early manhood in the Capital under the eyes of Sultan Abdul Hamid. Stamboul began to suffocate me, and I grew weary of being confined to the place where every kind of cruelty, mental and physical, was practised. Whenever one met a friend one was almost certain to hear of some trouble that he had to endure. Either his son had been exiled, or possibly murdered, or, during the night, his house had been surrounded and his papers examined. Even if nothing incriminating had been found he would still suffer. Then, perhaps, that particular friend would mysteriously disappear never to be seen or heard of again.

A so-called seditious article had been discovered in the school books of some innocent boys, and many of the students had, in consequence, been removed. No one knew where they went or what fate they shared. How was it possible to live at ease under such conditions? Officials in the vilayets knew that they would not be called to account

Early Manhood

for any corrupt practices so long as they appeared loyal to the Government. There was no consideration for duty among those in office : duty was a word unknown, and each man did as he pleased, revenged himself as he desired, and extorted wealth whenever opportunity arose.

Some of the more fortunate were able to escape to Egypt or to Europe. Abdul Hamid lived in an atmosphere of suspicion that grew more intense every day ; he feared even his friends. When it suited him he would give money, honours and position ; but when he imagined that his own interests would be better served by the eradication of individuals, he would show no scruple. Life became almost impossible for any one whose ideas were honest and who refused to stoop to the bribery and corruption that was rampant. I could not leave the Capital : I could not return to my own country. Such were the orders. Without a doubt Abdul Hamid was afraid of me and my family, but what he had cause to fear I was unable to discover. Thank God, he did not officially forbid us Arabs to meet, and thus I was able to associate with Shereefs and others who visited the Capital.

The succession of murders, imprisonments and expulsions merely served to increase the evil they were intended to cure. Previous to the cruel treatment he had shown towards my grandfather, I had a certain amount of respect for Abdul Hamid, but that respect had for long been shattered and replaced by disgust. God takes His revenge and I witnessed it. . . .

In April 1902 I married for the second time.

The romance connected with this second marriage of Ali Haider is of interest, for the lady concerned was of British parentage and showed him a real devotion which was fully reciprocated. Her father was Mirali Colonel Dunn Bey, one of the specialists employed in Turkey by the Sultan Abdul Aziz towards the end of his reign, and her acquaintance with the Shereef began when she returned to Stamboul from England to visit her parents after the death of her brother in 1897. A notice in the local paper announced her arrival, as a result of which the Dean of the American College for girls asked her to preside over a preparatory school attached to the College which was about to be opened. As her father desired her to remain in Stamboul she accepted the offer, but a few months later, in January 1898, Colonel Dunn died.

Miss Isobel Dunn continued her work at the American

A Prince of Arabia

College where the Indian tutor to the sons of Ali Haider one day applied for the assistance of an English lady with their education. This she consented to give in her spare time, and thus met her future husband. She was in the garden of his *yali* when he first came up to her; Miss Dunn dressed in the deep black of that period, and the Shereef in his white Arab head-dress and flowing robes. His slim figure and the dignity of his dress added height to his medium stature, and to Miss Dunn his bright brown eyes and gentle face made an instant appeal.

In his favourite position, with his arms clasped behind his back, he spoke to her. "I really should not be here," said Miss Dunn, "since I have so much work to do at the American School of which I am Director; but I am very fond of the Arabs and am specially interested in the direct descendants of the Prophet."

What was intended to have been an association of only a few months lengthened into years. The gentleness of the Shereef and his interest in such a wide variety of subjects increased the friendship between them and, into his confined existence, she brought news of the outside world, books and pictures. He and his brother talked of the hopes and aspirations of the Arabs, of his family and of Mohammedans in general, and Miss Dunn, in turn, spoke to him of Europe and England, of music, which he adored, of painting and of pictures.

Word eventually got to the Palace of these visits which Abdul Hamid ordered to cease forthwith. This angered the Shereef who exclaimed: "Am I not master in my own house? Can I not have whom I please without this interference?"

To Miss Dunn, an English girl, the orders of the Sultan meant nothing, but to the Shereef they meant much. There was only one solution. He proposed marriage and she accepted. Thus Miss Isobel Dunn became the Princess Fatma. For many years they lived together in a small house in the grounds, and she found in him a true and gentle heart. The children came and went as they pleased, and later she bore the Shereef two daughters. With her own people she had to sever all connection and she adapted herself to a quiet and secluded life.

Early Manhood

The daily round was simple, but inclined to be monotonous. The boys attended the Turkish University, and the two younger ones later pursued their studies at the English High School. They had lessons in music and art, they took their exercise on horseback, and occasionally went for short drives with their father. The courteous manners of the East were always observed, and no rough words were ever used.

The intense ceremony, however, which custom demanded should be shown in the home life of the Shereef was not conducive to natural gaiety and fun, and the children were even reprimanded for too much laughter. Nothing more than a smile was permitted. On the other hand, Ali Haider possessed a very definite sense of humour. Though he scarcely ever laughed aloud, he enjoyed a joke and an amused kindly twinkle in his eyes betrayed a wealth of human understanding. He loved his children and even allowed his youngest daughter, a high-spirited little girl, to climb on to his back during his genuflections when he prayed. She would chuckle with delight as she rolled on to the floor when he stood up again—till her mother came to the rescue and led her away.

CHAPTER SIX

THE TURKISH REVOLUTION

WITH TURKISH ADMINISTRATION AND POLITICS the Shereef associated himself as little as possible. The state of the country was growing intolerable because of the system of espionage which had developed to such an extent that, in popular belief, if three Turkish subjects were seen together one at least would be certain to be a spy. It was both painful and ludicrous to see respectable men conversing, and instantly ceasing conversation when a third drew near. Probably nothing did more to disgust the population of the better class with Abdul Hamid than did this general practice and extension of espionage. The caution which the Shereef showed during these years is, therefore, understandable, and he had to be most careful over anything he committed to paper. Even an inoffensive expression of opinion recorded in a diary might be found and used in evidence against him. Hence, he scarcely wrote a word, and the few recollections of this period which are available were recorded many years afterwards.

The Gestapo methods employed by the regime and the constant anxiety of minding every word or gesture he made must have had considerable effect on Ali Haider's character, making him too guarded in expressing opinions and crushing the spontaneity of his actions in later life.

In the year 1905 news was received of the death of the Emir Aoun-er-Refik who had succeeded Abdul Muttalib in Mecca in 1882. On his death there were no sons to succeed him, and a glance at the genealogical tree of the House of Devi-Aoun shows Abdillah, a younger brother, as the most likely successor. It will be recalled that he had been proclaimed Emir of Mecca by Osman Pasha when he deposed Abdul Muttalib, but this had been over-ruled by The Porte who had, instead, appointed Aoun-er-Refik. Hussein, son of another brother Ali, who had long since died, also felt he had a claim to the Emirate. Another Ali, however, the child of the eldest son of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, was to thrust himself forward.

The Turkish Revolution

Ali Haider, nevertheless, very reasonably regarded himself as the rightful successor. Was not the branch of Shereefs to which he belonged senior to that of Devi-Aoun? Had they not supplied the Emirs of Mecca for hundreds of years, and had he not enjoyed a special education under the very eyes of the Sultan to fit him for the rulership of the Hedjaz? Surely the Sultan would not fail to recognize his claim, and so redress the wrong he had done to his grandfather! It was all so obvious that it seemed scarcely necessary for him to exercise much influence with those in high places, or work behind the scenes to the same extent as Abdillah and Hussein. A mere application should suffice. At that time, however, he failed to appreciate the extent to which corruption in Turkey had caused officialdom to sink, and that the possession of hard cash, lavishly disbursed, was the sole criterion for an appointment of this nature.

When Aoun-er-Refik died in Mecca, Abdillah, Hussein and I each applied for the Emirate, but no decision was forthcoming from the Palace. Both Abdillah and Hussein were working very hard behind the scenes, but I found a friend in Abdul Houda, the Court Astrologer to the Sultan. He had been a frequent visitor to my grandfather and had often shown me kindness. He introduced me to his son, Hassan Bey, with whom I formed a close friendship. Years afterwards Hassan Bey was to become a Minister in Transjordan to the Emir Abdullah, son of Hussein.

One day I received a pressing invitation from Hassan Bey to come and see his father, who then raised the question of the Emirate with me. He spoke much and I was encouraged. Later, he spoke to me again on the same subject, and said it was possible that Abdillah would again become Emir. He stated, however, that Ratib Pasha, the military governor of the Hedjaz, had spoken of a certain Ali as a likely candidate and enquired who he might be. I told him that the Ali in question was the son of Shereef Abdullah, the eldest son of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun, who had been Emir in the days of my childhood. Abdul Houda was surprised, but stated that he was working hard in my favour, and hoped soon to have good news for me.

A few days later he again asked me to go and visit him, and this time told me he feared that Ali would obtain the Emirate as he was prepared to give the Government 70,000 liras. "Can you give this amount?" he asked.

A Prince of Arabia

"If 70,000 lira is necessary to purchase the inheritance of my grandfather," I replied, "I would certainly give it. But I do not possess as much."

"Do not worry," said Abdul Houda encouragingly, "I will still do my best for you." But all this weighed heavily on my heart. There was no one in whom I could confide, and I realized that intrigues were taking place around me. A few days later I paid one of my usual visits to the Palace, waiting in Hadji Ali's reception room until I was alone with him.

"Pasha," I said, "the position left by the Prophet is vacant and his descendant is here. I think he would serve the government faithfully."

But Hadji Ali just made a gesture with his hands as though he were counting money, and then smilingly queried: "Have you this?"

"No," I replied.

"Then it is quite useless," he rejoined.

I imagined that the money required was to swell the pockets of Hadji Ali and other officials, but I later realized that the bribery in a question of this kind was demanded by even higher authorities. A few days later I heard that Ali had been appointed Emir of Mecca. I now detested Abdul Hamid more than ever.*

One day Shereef Hussein, who later became Emir, came to me and expressed his regret that his uncle, Abdillah, had been unsuccessful in his attempt to regain the Emirate. "I will strive my hardest to overthrow Ali and destroy the power of Ratib Pasha," he said.

"Against Ali I will take no part," I exclaimed. This appeared to astonish Hussein who left me, almost abruptly. Intrigue, however, soon raised its head in Mecca.

A few weeks later, during one of my periodic visits to the Palace, I again saw Hadji Ali, dressed in his fur coat and with his praying beads in his hand. I approached, the Pasha rose and we salaamed in our customary manner. "Whose beads are you telling?" I enquired.

He made a gesture to indicate that he did not know. Whenever the Sultan was angry it was the habit of Hadji Ali to say nothing but merely tell his beads. This was such an occasion. So I turned to another visitor and, after a little desultory conversation, rose to go. Then suddenly, Hadji Ali left his beads alone and started conversing with me in an animated manner. So, in revenge, I took out my beads. "What are you telling?" he asked.

* Note: Ratib Pasha was supposed to have accumulated great wealth during his military governorship of the Hedjaz and it was reported that the Devi-Aoun family presented him with a gold dinner service encrusted with precious stones in order to obtain the Emirate.

The Turkish Revolution

"I will whisper in your ear," I replied. He drew near and I said, in very low cadence, our heads almost touching: "As many beads as I tell I bring curses on your Master."

"Be quiet," he hissed.

"Be silent yourself," I replied, and then departed. In future, whenever he saw a rosary in my hands he never asked the reason. Poor Hadji Ali was a gay soul and never really did me any harm. The friendship of Abdul Houda, the Court Astrologer, on the other hand, I began to doubt. He was loyal to his master, but I learnt to distrust him.

I was worried and restless in Stamboul. The condition of the country was going from bad to worse, and every one was oppressed by the system of espionage that emanated from Abdul Hamid. Daily it intensified. Many of my friends had either died mysteriously or been exiled; I, myself, could go nowhere, and hardly ever left my own premises. In order to give my brother something with which to occupy his mind and to provide sport and recreation for the children, I bought a farm at Oumerli Din Dere where there was some shooting and fishing to be enjoyed. But I only visited it on two occasions as my health now would not permit me much exertion. The boys, however, appreciated it, especially when their uncle purchased agricultural implements from Europe, as well as chickens and bees. So, working on the farm and at their lessons, taking an interest in music and enjoying their recreation, the time passed.

The conditions described by the Shereef were by no means exaggerated, but little could be done in the Capital to ameliorate them. For the past few years, however, there had been gathering in Macedonia bodies of disaffected subjects who recognized that the Sultan was the great hindrance in the improvement of these conditions, chiefly because all power was concentrated in his hands. His system of espionage had driven many from the country, and these refugees became emissaries of revolution. At first in secret, and then more openly, they plotted and they schemed, until a strong revolutionary party, led by able men of determination, was formed under the name of the Committee of Union and Progress. The seeds of reform sown by Midhat Pasha twenty years before had not proved barren; they had taken root in the minds of the Committee who had as their object the substitution of Midhat's constitutional reforms for the personal regime of

A Prince of Arabia

Abdul Hamid. By 1908 the movement had become thoroughly organized under such energetic leaders as Enver and Talaat, yet its proceedings were conducted with so much secrecy that it is doubtful if the Sultan realized its formidable character.

As nothing could be done without the support of the army, the Committee set to work to gain its adherence. The army, alone of all State services, had to a certain extent escaped the utter corruption that characterized every other department, and the efforts of the Committee were particularly successful with the Third Army Corps in Macedonia, who declared for the Party. This declaration was due, not so much to the fear of being reported as disloyal as to the general loathing at the employment of spies against them.

The Committee was galvanized into action earlier than they had planned because of two events of international importance. The sudden and unexpected entente between Great Britain and Russia was of the utmost significance for the Turks, who had only preserved their existence thanks to the rivalry in the East between the two Great Powers concerned. Secondly, as a result of the Reval Conference which had produced this entente, the British Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, suddenly announced in the House of Commons that the Powers had agreed to the nomination of a European governor in Macedonia and the reduction of the Turkish army in that province. Macedonia was in a lamentable state owing to Turkish misrule, but this decision came as a bomb-shell in Stamboul and convinced the Young Turks, as the members of the Committee were called, that instant action was necessary if the remains of the Turkish Empire in Europe were to be saved.

The army in Macedonia accordingly revolted. Telegrams were sent to Constantinople demanding the Constitution or Abdication, and stating that the troops had sworn not to lay down their arms until the Constitution was proclaimed. The Shereef Ali Haider describes the consternation among the Ministers in Stamboul.

During the few days previous to 22nd July 1908 telegrams were sent to Yildiz almost simultaneously from Salonika, Fersovich and



Miss Isobel Dunn [afterwards the Princess Fatma]
at the time of her marriage to the
Shereef Ali Haider

The Turkish Revolution

Uskub, where the heads of the army were associated, demanding a Constitution, and threatening that, if it were not immediately granted, something very serious would happen to the Sultan himself. An air of excited expectancy hung over Stamboul. To those who visited him the Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, showed the telegrams and said: "In Roumelie there is much disturbance. Read these." But the government was too weak and incompetent to act. The Minister of Public Instruction, Hashim Pasha, said: "The country is in a very bad way and matters will not pass quietly. Let the government act, if they are going to act, before the situation gets completely out of hand. Not to control the officers of the Third Army Corps is a sign of weakness which will have a very bad effect."

On the 22nd July the troops mutinied in Monastir and a new form of government was proclaimed in the barrack square. That night all the Ministers met together at Yildiz, collected the telegrams and started reading and discussing them. They had not finished when the lateness of the hour compelled them to break up. Then, on the following day, they met again. The circumstances, and especially the demand and its menace, furnished a rude awakening. After a long discussion it was recognized that a Constitution must be proclaimed: if it were not conceded only civil war could result. But who was to inform the Sultan of this decision, for they knew the vindictive character of their Imperial Master? After considerable hesitation, it was proposed that Abdul Houda, the Court Astrologer, should tell the Sultan the result of their deliberations. He had great influence with his master, who regarded his utterances as inspired, and he feared no man. Finally, he was called from a sick bed to perform this service. Thus, on the 24th July, the Constitution was proclaimed and the country went mad with joy.

Every one was flushed with excitement and, with bursting heads, lost all control. I shall not forget one day going from Bechiktash to Stamboul and watching a man harangue the crowds before Bab Ali. It was impossible to draw near, so from afar I listened. As I sat in my carriage a Dr. Fuad Bey came up and, with his eyes full of tears and in a state of great excitement, enquired: "Is it really true? Can it possibly last?" He was so full of emotion that he hardly knew what he was saying, and I was much affected. For some days this state of affairs continued, and people were scarcely aware of what they ate, whither they went or what they said. I spent some hours with the crowds and they were the sweetest moments in my life. Only those who have lived through years of oppression and bondage can appreciate this. Gradually normal conditions returned, and an astonished Europe gazed upon us.

A Prince of Arabia

With unexpected moderation, the leaders of the new movement, most of whom had suffered exile or imprisonment under Abdul Hamid's despotic rule, and were under no illusions as to his character, accepted his surrender as sincere conversion. They immediately decided that their best policy was to keep him as a figurehead on the Throne, and to do nothing to contradict the legend that the revival of the Constitution was a free gift from the Sovereign to his people. In this decision they displayed much statesmanship, for the more ignorant people, in spite of their oppression, regarded the person of the Sultan as sacred and inviolate.

Thus, a few months later, on the 17th December, Stamboul witnessed the astonishing spectacle of Sultan Abdul Hamid opening a Parliament which he had striven to prevent by every foul means at his disposal. It was a great day in the history of the Turkish Capital. From daybreak the whole city was in movement—troops marching to their positions, artisans feverishly putting finishing touches to the decorations, holiday crowds surging across the bridges over the Golden Horn into Stamboul. The narrow streets and causeways were lined with newly-clad battalions, all the cross-roads were picketed with cavalry, staff officers in brilliant uniforms clattered up and down the cobbles, all the windows and most of the roofs were bright with faces of Turkish women who, for this occasion, dispensed with the veil. All the lower roofs, and even the lower rim of the main dome of Sta. Sophia itself were black with sightseers, and the trees also were crowded till their branches broke.

At first the crowd seemed solemn as if dazed by the significance of this great thing which had come upon them, but when the deputies began to appear their true feelings burst forth in wild cheers. A diversion was caused by the arrival of twelve gorgeous Palace equipages with a eunuch escort. They contained the Palace ladies, but so dense was the crowd that it was difficult even to find a cramped corner for them. The German Ambassador was the first of the diplomatic corps to arrive, and he and his colleagues were greeted with spasmodic cheers. The arrival of Sir Gerald Lowther, the British Ambassador, however, had a vociferous reception, the mingled

The Turkish Revolution

cries of "Yashasin Inghlittera!" and "Vive l'Angleterre!" suggesting that even the humblest associated Great Britain with this red-letter day.

The Sultan was due to leave his Palace at noon. The hour passed; all eyes strained anxiously for his appearance. Would he fail to keep his promise at the last moment, and by so doing, plunge the city in an orgy of bloodshed? At 12.45 two *sous-officiers* were seen running up the road. The Sultan was coming! The sounds of music and cheering in the distance allayed all the anxiety which had been felt. First came a troop of lancers of the Imperial Guard, then five squadrons of grey horses swung past at a smart trot, and a dozen gaily caparazoned lackeys, followed by a group of aides-de-camp. Then came the royal carriage drawn by four slashing bays. The carriage was an open one, but the hood was up and, consequently, the Sultan was practically hidden from view. As the carriage swung past, the bands crashed out the Hamidian anthem, and the crowds burst into singing and shouts of acclamation; though whether they cheered for Abdul Hamid or the Constitution it was difficult to say.

Inside the Parliament House deputies and Senators had already taken their seats. Among the latter we can imagine the Shereef Ali Haider who had been one of the first appointed, looking dignified in his black robes, relieved by a bright coloured Hedjazi cap and white turban. It was a gathering of men of every class, race and creed from every province in the Empire. The differences of religion and race, and the contrasts of colour and dress were focussed in a striking picture. At last the Ministers appeared following the Sheikh-ul-Islam who was dressed in flowing robes of white and gold. Behind them walked Kiamil Pasha, the Grand Vizier. Then finally the Sultan. Hunched and haggard, he shuffled slowly to the front of the Imperial Box and gazed down upon the House, looking pale and nervous. All rose and saluted. Abdul Hamid replied, and then signed to his First Secretary to read the speech from the throne. No words of greater hypocrisy can ever have been uttered by a monarch than this speech of Abdul Hamid at the opening of his first Parliament:

"Senators and Deputies—On account of the difficulties

A Prince of Arabia

which beset the application of the Law of the Constitution which we caused to be promulgated after our accession to the Throne, and on account of the urgent reasons for such a course set before us by our Councillors and Statesmen, the first Parliament was temporarily dissolved until the education of the people had been brought to a sufficiently high level by the extension of instruction throughout our Empire. The reconvoation of Parliament was, therefore, postponed while in every province schools were opened and great efforts were made to advance the cause of education. This object having been attained, and the intellectual progress of the people having reached the desired standard, we have acquired the conviction that Parliament should once more assemble as a guarantee of the present and future prosperity of our country.

“ We have therefore once more promulgated a Constitution without hesitation or doubt, and, despite opposition from certain quarters, we have issued orders for the holding of elections and the opening of Parliament.

.

“ In view of the amicable relations existing between the Powers and the Ottoman Empire, we hope that we shall find a satisfactory solution of foreign political questions with the aid of the Great Powers. It is our desire that the national finances should be reorganized, the Budget properly balanced, the resources of the country developed, and its people's prosperity assured; that arts and education should be widely spread among the population and that the army and navy should be brought to a high degree of efficiency. We therefore hope that you will study the legislative proposals submitted by the Ministers to the Chamber of Deputies, and that the Deputies will succeed in elaborating laws worthy of acceptance by the Senate.

“ Our resolution to govern the country in conformity with the Law of the Constitution is irrevocable. (Cheers.) May it please the Almighty to grant that your endeavours

The Turkish Revolution

shall be crowned with success and that our Fatherland shall enjoy every blessing. God aid us in our task."

The deputies listened, without even an augur's smile to the first part of the Speech which was, surely, the strangest defence an autocrat has ever offered for his suppression of the liberties of the nation. The latter part, however, left the House in a good humour, and the acclamation which followed was loud and sincere. The quick, jerky habit of throwing his head round suggested the Sultan as a man full of apprehension, and when by a slight accident at the end of the Speech he dropped his handkerchief, his movement to the officer who picked it up indicated an impatient want of repose which is not a usual feature in reigning sovereigns. After a brief ceremony, the Sultan then left the Imperial box and returned to Yildiz, receiving great welcomes from the crowds as he drove through the streets.

A consideration of the reactions of this historical event on the rest of Europe is appropriate. The Young Turks had set up as their model the Parliament of Great Britain, they had sent a deputation to London to enter into friendly relations with the government, and they looked to England for sympathy and support in their efforts to establish a democratic Constitution. What an opportunity it was for this country to lend a real hand of help to these young, but inexperienced, reformers, and so earn the sincere friendship of a nation which would have been of mutual benefit to both and the world in general.

It is not the purpose here to suggest details of the policy which Great Britain might have adopted, but merely to emphasize the fact that at this period the Turks were genuine in their desire for friendship towards this country. That this was so may be gathered from the noticeable fact that no procession passed the British Embassy without giving a hearty cheer for the country which they recognized as the Mother of Free Parliaments. The British lost that friendship through faulty diplomacy and lack of understanding, and allowed others to insinuate themselves into the confidence of Turkey. Nevertheless, a strong body of Turkish public opinion was always ready to grasp the helping hand of Britain had it been

A Prince of Arabia

offered with sincerity; a feeling that was even noticeable during the first World War. But the statesmen of Great Britain failed to grasp the realities behind the situation, and looked upon the efforts of the Young Turks in a patronizing and half-cynical manner. The following extract from the *Levant Herald* of 29th July 1908 is sufficient to show how Great Britain reacted to the change in Turkey:

At a time when the people of Turkey are to be congratulated in all sincerity on the promulgation of the Constitution, the *Times* appears with a leader calculated to discourage; a people who are rejoicing at having received the liberal regime they have been demanding for the past thirty years. The *Times* says: "Unless Yildiz Kiosk gives the new Assembly a fair chance of working along its appointed path, its advent may only plunge Turkey into greater disorder than ever." From this phrase alone it is easy to infer in what spirit the article was written.

Thus Great Britain lost an opportunity for which she was to pay so dearly six years later. Another country, Germany, was not slow to take advantage of Britain's short-sighted diplomacy over Turkey. German writers and thinkers had long hoped to find a place in the sun for their country in the Turkish Empire, and this idea took full possession of William II on his accession. A year later he had visited the Sultan; a visit which marked the commencement of a series of incidents which enabled the Germans to obtain a preponderating position in Turkey. From that time the first care of German diplomacy was to obtain influence over the Sultan and his Ministers in order that Germany might carry out her designs in Asiatic Turkey. The most pressing of these was to obtain the monopoly of constructing a railway to Konia and thence to Baghdad.

The Turkish army had always been the dominating factor in the control of the policy of that country and, for years past, the Germans had done their best to acquire an influence over its training and administration. Although it was not always popular, a German Military Mission had been firmly established since 1878, and many Turkish officers had been trained

The Turkish Revolution

in Germany, including some of the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress. On more than one occasion Enver Bey himself had been received by the Kaiser, who never ceased to flatter him and his ability. Hence it was no difficult matter for Germany to insinuate herself more than ever into the affairs of Turkey, and take full advantage of the disappointment felt by many prominent Turks at England's refusal to take the Young Turk Party as seriously as it deserved.

It was inevitable that there should be some portions of the Turkish Empire which would not, at once, take kindly to the new regime. The Hedjaz was one of these, because the Turkish governor, Ratib Pasha, was a man who owed his position entirely to his personal and subservient relationship with Abdul Hamid. The Sultan had never been easy in his mind unless Ratib was in the Hedjaz where he kept order as he wished. No one dared complain, and the people were enjoined only to praise him. On the declaration of the Constitution, Ratib saw his own position imperilled and, unable to appreciate its full significance from a distance, declared against the new government. He was supported by the Grand Shereef, Ali, with whom he was closely associated, and mutinied with the Seventh Army Corps. Government troops, however, defeated the mutineers; Ratib was captured and brought to Stamboul in disgrace. The Emir was deposed, and the Shereef Ali Haider records his own chagrin at not being appointed to succeed him.

On the deposal of Ali, his uncle, Abdillah, who had succeeded my grandfather for a few days, was elected in his place. The news of his appointment so excited him that he died suddenly and, to my amazement, Hussein was elected to the Emirate. I had hoped for justice when the new Constitution was declared, but where was justice and where was right?

One night, during Ramadan, I visited the *konak* of Kiamil Pasha and asked him outright why Hussein had been appointed to the Emirate of Mecca instead of me. "There was no question of preference," he replied. "Hussein is your senior."

"Yes," I answered, "he may be older, and the senior member of his branch of Shereefs, the Devi-Aouns, but I am the head representative of my own—the direct—branch of Shereefs, that of Devi-Zeyd."

A Prince of Arabia

"In politics," he replied, "such matters are of no consideration. You are now heir to the Emirate." He made some more futile remarks and I left in anger.

With the establishment of the Constitutional regime more freedom was given to those who wished to travel. Hitherto, the Shereef Ali Haider had been kept a virtual prisoner in Stamboul, under the eye of a suspicious Sultan, but now he had more liberty. So, when a chilly autumn made its appearance, feeling depressed and weary, he ventured to obtain permission to pass the winter in Egypt. The Sultan could not refuse, but he did his best to place every obstacle in the path of the Shereef to prevent his departure. It is a relief to turn from the involved politics of the period to the lighter travels of the Shereef.

I went to the Palace to obtain leave, and saw Nouri Pasha, the First Chamberlain, to whom I put my request, asking him to submit it to the Sultan. "I desire His Majesty's permission," I said, "but, even if I do not get it, I intend to go." That evening I received information from the Grand Vizier that my attendance was required at the Palace, so, the following morning, which happened to be the day on which the vessel I had booked my passage was to sail, I again went to Yildiz.

I saw the Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, and he informed me that I was to postpone my journey to Egypt as the Sultan desired to appoint me Sheikh-ul-Islam. I thanked him for the honour, but replied that I had not adapted myself for that position, and that there were others more suitable. All I wanted was permission to go to Egypt. He persisted, but my insistence prevailed, and at length he left me to consult the Sultan. I waited, and later he returned. "His Majesty grants you the leave you desire," he said, "but wherever you go, and whatever country you visit, he must know your exact address."

I thanked him and departed. The Sultan was angry, but what did I care? I felt free, and I thanked God. I went down to Galata where I met my brother and my sons, to whom I gave the news. I boarded the Egyptian boat, *Ismailieh*, which was lying alongside and, soon after noon, we sailed. This was my first separation from my children.

I had passed the last thirty years under tyranny, my soul felt crushed and my strength seemed insufficient to withstand any strain. As the boat got under way, I emerged on deck and gazed across the

The Turkish Revolution

Bosphorus with emotion towards my home in Chumlijah. The weather was perfect, the view entrancing, and as the boat gathered speed a crescent moon rose behind the hills overlooking my home. Was it symbolic, I wondered?

After a short stay in Alexandria, Ali Haider proceeded to Cairo where he had booked accommodation in the Continental Hotel. The freedom of the people, their gaiety and the bright atmosphere of the city was found to be in refreshing contrast to the gloom and suspicion of Stamboul, and the Shereef records his sense of relief. He called on the Khedive who received him cordially, but deftly turned the conversation every time Ali Haider spoke about the political situation. With others, though, he was able to talk at length on any important subject.

I met many men, both learned and interesting, but the general public was dirty, though reasonably intelligent. The upper classes definitely did not want the British in the country but others, and especially the ordinary workmen, desired that they should remain. Some even said that they would prefer the rule of Turkey. I was invited to a banquet held in the Continental Hotel at the inauguration of Parliament and, among the two hundred guests, I found many whom I knew. The speeches were good, and one of the speakers expressed his pleasure at my presence on this occasion. Telegrams of good wishes from the British Government were read aloud but, to the astonishment of every one, there was no message from the Khedive; neither did he even send a representative.

The days passed, and my time was spent accepting invitations and receiving more people who came to call upon me. At length I decided to return to Alexandria. After a long programme of farewells I took the train and, at Ismailia, said good-bye to friends who were travelling to Mecca for the Pilgrimage. The scene there gave me pleasure, and I admired the stately pine trees that led down in an avenue towards the banks of the Canal.

We reached Port Said in the afternoon where I decided to spend a few days in the Continental Hotel. After Cairo, Port Said appeared small, but I liked the air which was more bracing. After I had rested, I visited the statue of de Lesseps and, from the position of this famous landmark, I watched the ships coming and going. Everything seemed so gay and full of life. As the sun set, many people gathered round the tables outside the hotel, refreshed themselves and

A Prince of Arabia

listened to the music. I liked the place, every one seemed free; there was none of that oppression to which I had for long been accustomed; all was movement and activity. Next morning I went for a long drive and again enjoyed the life about me, the different people and the shops which opened when a ship arrived. I went to a cinema, the first I had ever seen.

Never since the days of my childhood had I felt so free, so happy and so gay. Now, because of the Revolution, I was able to enjoy myself, but until this moment I had not really appreciated the freedom I had gained. At Cairo I had been unable to summon up enough courage to go to a theatre. We entrained for Alexandria and, that evening, watched a ball from the balcony of my hotel. I admired the dresses but not the dancing. I do not like such things.

On the next day I left for home and embarked in a steamer called *Ismailieh* where the company made me welcome. Howdet Pasha, an equerry of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, was among the passengers, and he spoke to me much about the Hedjaz which he had just visited. I spoke about my dreams for the holy places; I wanted Schools of Art opened in Mecca and Schools of Commerce in Jeddah, a good motor road from Mecca to Taif, and a fleet of automobiles from Mecca to Medina. I would have, also, the Harem Sheref illuminated by electricity. Then, last but not least, I looked into the not too distant future when we should have a University at Taif where, during the season of the Haj, examinations could be held for Moslems from all parts of the world. Of such things I spoke to the Pasha.

Another passenger was an Englishman, a former Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey. He had spent four years in that country, and was now visiting Stamboul for a week to see what changes had taken place since the Revolution. He had travelled extensively. There was another Englishman, a merchant, who had lately motored from Aleppo to Basra, and was probably the first one ever to do so. Referring to Baghdad in the course of conversation, he stated that it would be impossible to find a dirtier city anywhere in the world and, as he described his impressions, I was sorry I had spoken. "Remember," I said, "what a wonderful city it was in the days of Haroun ar Raschid. It then had a famous University."

At last I saw the minarets of Stamboul rise out of the morning mist. I thought of all those who had shown me kindness in Egypt, of the many who had come to offer me hospitality, rich and poor, those in high position and those in more humble circumstances. I had endeavoured to treat all with equal courtesy. From humble people one often receives the most genuine kindness.

The Turkish Revolution

Ali Haider returned from Egypt in the early spring of 1909 to find that the enthusiasm of the Capital had given way to uncertainty and apprehension. On the one hand public opinion had begun to mistrust Abdul Hamid and to suspect that, though silent, he was plotting to rid himself of the Committee which had brought about the Revolution. On the other hand, there was a steadily growing dissatisfaction with the new regime which had done little to ameliorate the condition of the people. To a great extent this dissatisfaction was caused by unjustifiable impatience but, nevertheless, the advocates of reaction had begun to raise their heads.

It was the 13th April 1909 when what appeared to be a general revolt of all the troops in the Capital occurred. That it was an attempt at counter revolution became evident, but there appeared to be no leaders, the mob evoked no enthusiasm and provoked little opposition. Hence, the revolt was easily overcome with small loss of life. Without doubt the demonstration was an attempt to subvert the Constitution and bring back the personal government of Abdul Hamid. That the demonstrators were supplied with money was proved by the confessions of men upon whom considerable sums had been found. The question which everybody asked was, to whom could a counter revolution be beneficial, and only one answer could be given.

When news of the events in Stamboul reached Salonika, the troops in Macedonia, under the command of Shevket Pasha, who was loyal to the Constitution, immediately commenced to march on the Capital. Small opposition was encountered and, on the 22nd April, Shevket's army arrived in the neighbourhood of Yildiz and took possession of the outlying barracks round the Sultan's residence. The advance was so rapid that Abdul Hamid was unable to decide on any action, remaining ingloriously passive. The Committee of Union and Progress had once more triumphed.

Thereupon, though not for the first time, a strong party was formed in favour of the deposition of Abdul Hamid. The Committee then, careful to act in conformity with the Sacred Law, applied to the Sheikh-ul-Islam for a *fetva* authorizing his deposition. This was obtained without difficulty, Abdul

A Prince of Arabia

Hamid was deposed, and Mohammed Reched Effendi, his younger brother, proclaimed his successor.

It was on the evening of the 27th April when Abdul Hamid was informed of the irrevocable decision of the Committee that he should be deposed. Pathetically he pleaded for his life, but there was no intention to harm him, and Salonika was chosen as his place of exile. At midnight on that very day a procession of automobiles, accompanied by a squadron of cavalry, set forth from Yildiz for the railway station along part of the route where, a few short months before, Abdul Hamid had made his triumphal drive to open his first Parliament. He was permitted to take with him three Sultanas, four concubines and a retinue; in all twenty-seven persons. His final request was to be allowed to take with him a favourite Angora cat.

Thus Abdul Hamid passed from the pages of history. He had degraded Turkey and, through the corruption and degeneracy of his government, had driven the country to the verge of destruction.

In the ceremonies associated with the accession of the new Sultan, the Shereef Ali Haider took a leading part.

Tewfik Pasha, the Grand Vizier, came to me and said: "You will be the first to take the new oath of allegiance." So I swore on the Holy Koran, and I was then followed by the Grand Vizier, himself, and the other Ministers who were present. That was a strange day. I and two others were chosen as representatives of the Senate to work under Shevket Pasha, and together we went to pay our respects to the new Sultan. He received us with much courtesy, and we gave him the congratulations of the Senate.

The actual Investiture of the Sultan, which occurred shortly after his Proclamation, was simple. It was called the *Bayaat*, or the Kissing of Hands, and took place under the great dome in the courtyard of the Old Seraglio, between the building containing the *Hirker Sadaat* and the Imperial Treasury. No music or ceremonial procession was associated with it, and the Sultan merely sat on the historic Throne of gold and jewels while the oath of allegiance was read and each man present advanced to kiss his hand.

The Turkish Revolution

On the first Friday after the Investiture, occurred the more spectacular ceremony when the Sultan was girt with the traditional sword of Osman. This took place in a room adjoining the small mosque of Eyoub situated at the head of the Golden Horn. Thither the Sultan drove in state through decorated streets, lined with troops holding back the immense crowds that gathered to witness the occasion. Eyoub was the headquarters of the Konia dervishes whose privilege it was to gird on the historic sword, and this right was exercised by their leader, the Chilibe Effendi.

Prayers were recited and then, in the presence of the Cabinet and others of importance, the sword was passed round the waist of the Sultan. Mehmed Reched was somewhat rotund and, when the crucial moment came, the Chilibe Effendi found he could not reach right round to buckle on the belt. At the Sultan's side stood the Shereef Ali Haider, and he, recognizing the superstitious inference which would be drawn if the sword were to fall, reached out and gave the necessary assistance. The Sultan never forgot this action of the Shereef and, in consequence, showed him much consideration. Mehmed Reched was superstitious, devout and inclined to be simple, but he was sufficiently astute to retain his throne until he died nine years later.

To watch and take an active part in the political life of Stamboul was wearying to a man like the Shereef. He grew tired and felt that the best escape was a change of air and another holiday which he urgently needed.

One evening Abed Ullah Effendi, the deputy for the Aiden district, visited me at Chumlijah and suggested a visit to Smyrna and the Aiden vilayet. To his great delight I decided to go with him. Since my two eldest sons were at school I made up my mind to take my third son, Mohammed Emin, and also my brother. A few days later we crossed over to Stamboul and boarded the Egyptian steamer *Ezzadieh*.

In Smyrna and Aiden, Ali Haider had a great reception and he records a series of enthusiastic meetings and parties, a visit to the well-known family of Whittalls and the presence of crowds desiring merely to touch him because "he represented the body of the Holy Prophet."

A Prince of Arabia

At length, Chumlijah and home. I seized an early opportunity to visit Tewfik Pasha, the Grand Vizier, who asked me my impressions of Smyrna and the vilayet. I told him I had been impressed chiefly by three things; the quality of the farms, the water power available which was not utilized, and finally, the general ignorance of the people. I spoke about their sufferings and the way in which they were misgoverned. Many animals belonging to the poorer people were stolen by bands of wandering gipsies, and half the remainder of what was left was taken in tithes by the Government tax collector. In Suki, for instance, I told him that a very third class Kaimakam extracted taxes of first class value, and that there was much corruption. "Send suitable men as government officials, and then the best results will be achieved," I said.

Later in the year I decided to visit Broussa, where I had relations. I took one attendant, Omar Agha, and sailed for Mudania whence I travelled by road to Broussa, the train journey being long and tedious. The scenery was most attractive, the air healthy, and I began to enjoy myself immensely. I visited the principal mosques and tombs, drove out into the country and watched the weaving of silk. Without doubt the district has wealth, but it is for the people to bring it out. The land is fertile and well-watered, the breeding of cattle is easy, and the development of electric power should not be difficult. I visited the School of Agriculture, but was disappointed by its neglect. The farming implements were out of date, and the animals, with the exception of one magnificent bull, were in poor condition.

One evening I had a craving to hear music. Someone began to sing in a house near by, and the notes of a stringed instrument came softly across the peaceful air. From the minarets, uluma called the evening prayer, and frogs croaked contentedly in the heavy grasses. It was very dark, and the trees around the house made it darker still, enshrouding the whole in mystery. The moon then rose, clouds hurried across the sky, and the stars shone with a brilliance that was spiritual. The running waters of a stream could be heard bubbling over a heap of stones, and the cries of distant animals mingled with the fainter notes of insects. Each was melodious, and the combination was perfect harmony. God's greatness strikes even the eyes of the blind, and everything demonstrates the greatness of the Creator. I, the poor and humble creature in the house, exclaimed in astonishment: "*Allah Akbar*"—*God is Great*.

Days of joy and beauty followed, during which I revelled in the magnificent scenery of the country-side, and then, at length, I decided it was time for me to leave. This time I travelled by train to Mudania and thence, by boat, to Stamboul.



1909-1912

Disillusion follows Revolution

War with Italy

The Shereef visits Medina

Outbreak of First Balkan War



H.H. Shereef Abdul Mejid

[Eldest son of Ali Haider]

First Minister for Transjordan at Court of St. James, 1947

CHAPTER SEVEN

PILGRIMAGE TO MEDINA

ALTHOUGH FEWER REVOLTS IN HISTORY had shown greater heroism or more genuine fervour of exalted patriotism than that of the Young Turks at its inception, yet, as time wore on, inexperience and lack of suitable guidance was to produce complete and utter disillusion. In the early stages the leaders of the Young Turk party had flaunted their liberalism, and were moved by a genuine desire to secure equal and just treatment for all the subject races. They made extravagant promises which were impracticable of realization and, when this was discovered, reaction set in accompanied by an oppression as odious as any in the time of Abdul Hamid. It was not recognized immediately by these Young Turks that, in an Empire conquered and maintained by the sword of Osman and his successors, a real equality of races never would be possible; the Turks must continue to be dominant.

The first reaction of these wild promises on the non-Moslem elements, was to awake in them a sense of nationalism and a desire to assert their rights as privileged *national* communities. A dangerous state of mind for peoples insufficiently educated. Just as when President Wilson proclaimed the principle of self-determination in 1919 it gave birth to national aspirations among peoples insufficiently prepared, so did the cry of the Young Turks unleash forces that got beyond control because they were not fully understood. The result was to produce oppression where freedom had been promised; intolerance when toleration was so badly needed. The granting of political autonomy is a gift that can only be given by wise and experienced administrators.

It soon became clear to the Young Turks that they could not risk, or tolerate, the extension of the principle of local autonomy which had previously been advocated with such power of argument. It could lead only to separation. Attempts were first made to withdraw the privileges which had been granted to the Christian communities; Turkish bands

A Prince of Arabia

were formed with the object of exterminating those not in sympathy with the Committee, and measures were undertaken to force peoples like the Albanians into a state of subserviency to the Constantinople government. The Young Turks then made up their minds to embark on the disastrous policy of the Turcification of all the subjects of the Empire, and this they did whole-heartedly, but with an ineptitude which was as clumsy as it was fatal. The Christian elements were immediately alarmed, and became violently disaffected towards the new regime, particularly with respect to the obligation requiring them to perform military service.

The attitude adopted by the Great Powers towards the changed regime in Turkey did not redound to their credit, and tended to aggravate the situation. Each wished to profit by the inexperience of the Young Turk leaders, in order to further their own schemes for expansion. Reference has already been made to the attitude of Great Britain which was so coldly critical of the Young Turks as to be virtually hostile. Furthermore, when the Committee of Union and Progress, in their grave financial need, sought a loan, they received a rebuff both in London and Paris. The result of this was to drive them back into the arms of Germany who was all too willing to extend financial aid. Russia, fearful that a strong Turkey would prove a hindrance to her policy of expansion, fostered the discontent in the Balkans and made a secret agreement with Austria that the Straits should be regarded as a Russian zone and that Bulgaria should be recognized as a sphere of Russian influence. Austria, on the other hand, feared that a strong government in Constantinople would be a serious obstacle to her expansion towards the Aegean, and accordingly proclaimed the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

What chance had the Young Turks, inexperienced as they were in administration, to make good in face both of the intrigue and opposition of the Great Powers and the militant elements in their own communities? The righteous indignation that condemned them in the eyes of European sentimentalists should have been directed towards the hypocrisy of the diplomacy that stultified the efforts of the Young Turks when they first came into power.

Pilgrimage to Medina

While Turkey was still smarting from the annexation of her former provinces by Austria, the next blow came from an unexpected quarter, in September 1911, when Italy, assured of the neutrality of the Powers, made a sudden attack on Tripoli after giving the Porte an ultimatum of only twenty-four hours. This province was an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, governed directly from Constantinople, and its population was purely Moslem. Italy had no valid cause for complaint on behalf of her few subjects who resided in the province, and it was a case of pure aggression, prompted by jealousy of France in respect of Tunis to which Italy had a stronger claim. How easy it was to magnify, yet indirectly encourage, the oppression by Turkey of subject peoples, in order to obtain sympathy and allow other governments to gloss over the fact that they were in reality buying the co-operation of Italy with a province which was not theirs to give!

Besides the occupation of Tripoli, Italy bombarded, without provocation, the Turkish town of Preveza in the Adriatic, and compelled the Turkish fleet to seek refuge in the Dardanelles. She also took possession of the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea over which there was a controversy that lasted many years. Abdul Hamid had cruelly neglected the Turkish Navy which he feared might one day turn its guns on Yildiz if it became too powerful. Money, therefore, that had been voted for its maintenance had been continually misappropriated and, on the outbreak of the Italian war, it was caught at a serious disadvantage. The Young Turks realized that without a strong navy the defence of Tripoli would be almost insuperable, as they would be unable to maintain communications with that province or send the much needed reinforcements. Nevertheless, under the able leadership of Enver Bey, the Porte made a gallant defence of its African province which continued until October 1912. Had Turkey not then been confronted by a danger much nearer home, which led to the outbreak of the Balkan wars, the peace imposed might have been less to her disadvantage.

The Shereef Ali Haider had welcomed the Young Turk revolution with an enthusiasm tempered by realism. He was

A Prince of Arabia

the first to acknowledge the necessity of reform, but he knew what was practical and what was impossible to fulfil. He was fully aware, also, of the shortcomings both of the Turks and of his own countrymen, and that it would be impossible to eradicate in a day the corruption which had eaten into the very heart of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, he appreciated the sterling qualities of the Turks, and had complete faith in their ability to build an Empire on the ideals of democracy. He had the greatest admiration for the British Empire and looked forward to the day when Stamboul would be the centre of a great Moslem Empire held together by similar ideals, and working in the closest co-operation with that of Great Britain. It was a grand dream, capable of realization, which would have had a profound effect on the peace of the world. That the extension of autonomy must be slow he had no doubt, and that it would take time before the people were sufficiently educated to accept the full responsibility of representative government was painfully obvious.

It was therefore with disgust and a growing sense of disappointment that he watched the efforts of the reformers directed in a manner which he feared would prove fatal to his conceptions. Although he had many friends in the Party, he consistently refused to associate himself directly with the Committee of Union and Progress, but turned his attention towards guiding the aspirations of his own countrymen, the Arabs, who had been awakened by the cry of reform. One result of the revolution had been to give an impetus to the National movement which had begun, some years before, to gain ground in the Arabian provinces of the Turkish Empire, and especially Syria.

It was difficult for the Shereef to do more than exert an influence in the background, temper the ardour of the irresponsible nationalist, and advise the leaders of the State on the only sound policy to be adopted in their dealings with the Arabs. He clung to one fundamental principle, which was the necessity for absolute honesty as the sole means of achieving political appeasement. He had seen to what depths of degradation corrupt officialdom could plunge a country, and he therefore worked consistently to secure a realization of this

Pilgrimage to Medina

principle among his countrymen. With this object, then, he decided to visit Syria towards the end of 1911 under cover of a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prophet in Medina. He could then study the conditions of the country at first hand and, on his return, report in full to the Turkish Cabinet the result of his recommendations. Although the Italian war was already in progress, the Shereef was not deterred, because the torpedoing of passenger vessels had not become a popular form of warfare. He felt, with good reason, that there was no need for any anxiety.

Before he left Stamboul the Shereef obtained from the Sultan a personal message for the people of Syria, and the government expressed a desire that he should take every opportunity to spread propaganda in its favour. His brother, Jaffer, had already gone to Syria to attend to some personal business, and had taken with him the eldest son of the Shereef, Abdul Mejid. Ali Haider, therefore, decided to follow with Mohiddin, his second son, meet his brother in Damascus and then proceed with both sons to Medina. On the way he intended to visit the tomb of his great-grandfather, Shereef Ghalib, at Salonika. He describes the voyage in his simple, straightforward style.

After the completion of our preparations for the journey I set sail with my son, Mohiddin, in the Russian steamer *Tzaritza* on the 6th October 1911. A few days earlier my brother had left in a French steamer, but I desired to call at some Mediterranean ports and, above all, visit the tomb of my great-grandfather, Shereef Ghalib, at Salonika.

I said good-bye on the quay to my little ones, Sfyneh and Feisal, who had come to see me off, and I requested my friend, Djamel Bey, to take them home. My son, Mohammed Emin, who had accompanied me to Smyrna, wanted to come on board with me but, as the vessel was some distance off, I told him to remain with his little brother and sister. He was, however, so earnest in his desire that I changed my mind, but as he was trying to pass a bag over to his brother, he slipped and fell into the sea. A porter jumped, fully dressed, after him and he was quickly rescued. I kissed him and left him in tears. We laughed, but the incident was pathetic and always remained vividly in my mind. The boatman was by no means an

A Prince of Arabia

expert, and it was with much difficulty that we eventually got on board.

With his fellow passengers—mostly Russian—Ali Haider was not impressed because they were so dirty, and he complained particularly of the number of Russian priests whose manners upset him. At Salonika he landed to visit the tomb of Ghalib and tried unsuccessfully to see the kiosk where Abdul Hamid was imprisoned. Later, they called at Mersina on the coast of Asia Minor where they heard the disturbing report that the Italians were bombarding Beirut, but, on making enquiries, Ali Haider learnt that the alarm had originated from an engagement off the coast between an Italian destroyer and a Turkish gunboat. The latter had been sunk, but two shells had fallen in Beirut during the battle.

Near Tripoli the ship ran ashore, and the Shereef records how the passengers tried to reassure him by emphasizing that the Russians were an 'enlightened' people and that no harm could possibly arise from this misfortune. The ship was eventually refloated and proceeded into Tripoli where the Shereef, disgusted with the dirt and discomfort of the *Tzaritza*, decided to land. Here he received a big reception from the Moslem community and, when he left by train for Damascus on the day following his arrival, he had honours paid him by a guard and band which had been paraded at the railway station.

As we climbed the mountains of Lebanon the scenery was magnificent; the summits were capped with snow and, between the massive cedars on the lower slopes, swift moving streams ran seawards. The moon shone and everything was superb. On arrival at Damascus, Abdul Mejid met us at the station, and we drove to the kiosk of Abdul Rahman Pasha who had kindly offered to accommodate us. There, feeling tired, I rested.

As I was dressing next morning, Omar Agha came to tell me that the Governor had called to see me. This visit was followed by many others, both official and private. I had been commissioned to give the people of Syria the salaams of His Majesty the Sultan, and for this purpose a big review of troops had been arranged which attracted an enormous crowd. After the review there was a large banquet, and we then went to the Grand Mosque where a Mewloud (Memorial Service) was read after the usual prayers before we visited, in state,

Pilgrimage to Medina

the tomb of the great Salaheddin. We saw the wreath which had been placed on this tomb by the Emperor of Germany, and the flowers arranged by the Empress with her own hand were at the head. I wondered if the spirit of Salaheddin was pleased!

Many officials and others came to visit me, and I received considerable attention. But each time I spoke of the future of Syria there was silence: on this subject no one would utter a word. At last I said in desperation: "When I return from Medina let us meet together, discuss the question with candour and, if there are any suggestions, I will place them before Talaat Pasha (Minister of the Interior) on my return to Stamboul." But my words provoked no enthusiasm, and my offer was received in silence.

Ali Haider ascribed the lack of confidence which the people of Syria appeared to place in him to his loyalty to the Turks, but he tried to make it clear that this loyalty to the Sultan did not suggest his condonation of the cruelty and oppression shown towards the Syrians. His main object, he emphasized, was the education of the Arab nation to fit it for a position of responsibility.

After a fortnight in Damascus, during which he examined the Syrian demands, which were quite moderate, for more control over their own affairs, the Shereef Ali Haider took train to Medina with his two sons. In the eyes of devout Moslems of the Sunni persuasion the Shereef was held in the greatest veneration, and an enormous multitude, therefore, assembled to witness his departure to the tomb of his ancestor. Troops were paraded in his honour and, at every station where the train stopped, similar marks of respect were paid. Ali Haider was sufficiently human to derive a considerable amount of satisfaction from ceremonial arranged for his benefit, and was most critical of any lack of attention towards his person. At length, Medina—the holy city whose Tomb has for ever been an object of adoration by Islam. As the train approached, the Shereef shared the emotion of any other Moslem pilgrim.

From afar, as we approached Medina, the holy Tomb could be seen standing out from among the other buildings. With what joy and exultation we beheld this sacred edifice! The whole population of Medina turned out to greet us on arrival, when we immediately proceeded on foot to the holy Tomb. At the house of the Sheikh of

A Prince of Arabia

the Harem Sheref we performed our ablutions; and then entered the Tomb itself. All the hereditary keepers received us at the entrance. I cannot speak of the intense emotion I felt at being in this holy centre, and I thanked God that my sons experienced similar sensations of awe and reverence. Evening prayers having been recited, we proceeded to the house where we intended to stay during our visit to Medina. This belonged to the Sheikh of the Harem Sheref, whose guests we now were. After the evening meal, we again went to the Harem Sheref, prayed, went round the Tomb and returned to bed.

Early the following morning, we once again visited the Tomb where the Sheikh was waiting to receive us. After we had said our morning prayers we assisted with the service following, and then received many visitors. Each of our five prayers during the day was uttered at the Tomb. That evening, after prayers, we went to the club of the Young Turks where a large assembly had gathered, including the Mufti and many other learned men. The military band played, speeches were made both in Arabic and Turkish, and poetry was recited. I thanked the company for their kind reception, and then went home. On the next day, I went early to the Harem Sheref and performed service at the Tomb in the form of dusting and generally assisting the eunuchs in charge.*

Then I fell ill, and Abdul Mejid, too, was unwell. The Sheikh of the Harem Sheref could not do enough for us; he was for ever attending on our wants, and my sickness disturbed him. When, at last, I recovered, I bought a collection of presents: prayer beads and perfumes consisting of essence of oil and rose.

At length came the day for me to leave. I took my farewell of the Tomb and then went to the barracks. All the troops were drawn up, and bands played in my honour as I said good-bye to the Commandant, who accompanied me to the station with a distinguished following of notables. I bade farewell to them, and they expressed their sincere regret at my departure after such a short visit. Under the protection of the Holy Prophet we boarded the train in which we were accompanied by the Sheikh of the Harem Sheref, and other learned men, for an appreciable distance up the line. At each station there were troops standing at attention as I arrived. On the following morning, at the hour at which I had been privileged to serve my

* The Tomb of the Prophet is dusted with special small brushes. A distinguished family of Seyids, who bear the title *Ferushi Vekil*, direct this work, the performance of which is an honour retained in a Meccan family. The Sultan would provide a special brand of incense to be burnt, and sticks of charcoal, containing frankincense, would be placed in silver holders and allowed to smoulder.

Pilgrimage to Medina

Prophet, I rose, but was far from his resting place with ever increasing distance.

On the return journey to Damascus official receptions awaited the Shereef at each station. It was, nevertheless, a tedious journey; the train was slow, the engine constantly broke down and there was no relief from the dust of the desert. On arrival at Damascus, therefore, the Shereef was glad when the receptions were over and he was able to seek privacy and rest in the house of his host, Abdul Rahman Pasha. After enjoying his hospitality for a few days, during which he had lived as free a life as his position permitted, Ali Haider took train to Beirut.

How can I describe the beauty of that morning and the magnificent setting in which the train wound its way from Damascus to Rayak! Everything was in order and well kept. If the Arabs and Syrians are proud of their country they have every reason; they should recognize the gifts of God, protect and care for them. At Rayak there was snow on the mountains, and thunder roared in the clouds. Then we left the heights to find spring in Beirut. Our clothes were too heavy, as Beirut was warm.

The Governor, Commandant and many others were on the station platform to welcome Ali Haider before driving to the Government *Konak* for a large reception. Visits, dinner parties and more receptions followed each other in quick succession and, at each, the Shereef discussed his plans for the future of Syria. He wanted to establish a university at Beirut, to appoint Governors over each of the three vilayets and generally give encouragement for local undertakings. But he always put first the question of improved education.

At one of these visits to the Commandant, Ali Haider records with amazement a large portrait of the German Emperor hung in a position of honour, and he clearly resented it. But one thing seemed to inspire him—his great faith in the future of Syria and the intelligence of the people, though he appreciated only too well the lack of encouragement given by the Turkish Government and the stultifying effect of their administration.

At last the day dawned for my departure. In the afternoon I

A Prince of Arabia

repaired on board the French steamer which was to take me home, the *Wali* staying with me on deck for some hours before we actually sailed. Many others, including the *Mufti*, also came for a few moments' conversation and a last farewell. Then the ship began to move and, once again, I saw the magnificent view of Beirut from the sea. The aspect of the mountains rising into the clouds behind the town formed an ever changing kaleidoscope of subtle colour, and my heart rejoiced as I gazed upon the scene. Seagulls flew about the ship as if they, too, had come to say farewell, and when they had thus done their duty they too withdrew. Gradually the mountains of Lebanon, with their wooded slopes, disappeared into the eastern haze. The night was perfect, and the weather calm, music charmed the peaceful scene and girls broke into song. Every one was gay. The Captain, also, was in a pleasant frame of mind, and fond of joking, it seemed, with the ladies. In fact, I thought his head was not quite clear, as his exuberance was excessive!

As we approached the Dardanelles, where we anchored for a few hours, the wind died down and all was calm again. The sunset that evening was magnificent, and gave to the mountain tops delicate shades of harmonious colouring. In contrast to God's strength and glory, man's efforts seem so feeble. Next morning, Omar Agha called me early, and I hurried on deck to catch the first glimpse of my home in Chumlijah, and to admire its beauty from the sea. The ship anchored off the Golden Horn and, as I talked with some of the passengers in the saloon, Omar Agha came down to inform me that my children were on the quay to welcome us. In haste I went on deck to see my little ones, Mohammed Emin, Feisal and my daughter, Sfyneh. Since we were not alongside, I hailed a caique so that I could join them without delay. Together we then drove to the Scutari boat, and so home to Chumlijah where I found all was well. Joy was in my heart to be home again after experiencing the great spiritual exultation of a visit to the Tomb of my Prophet.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE BALKAN WAR

THE FIRST CONSIDERATION OF ALI HAIDER on his return was to write down and prepare the plans he would like to see carried out in Arabia in order to improve the general condition of his country. He did not pander to the political aspirations of irresponsible nationalists, whose chief motive was personal power, but he outlined schemes which were practical, provided that they were carried out with honesty of purpose and determination. The wide scope of these schemes is suggestive and perhaps one day they may materialize.

I began to make plans for the improvement of my country and to crystallize my ideas as to what should be done in order to facilitate the pilgrimage to the Holy Places. There was room for improvement in every conceivable direction and I longed to be in a position to go ahead with my schemes. Of course, the Hedjaz railway was a perfect God-send, and work was already being carried out in order to extend the line from Medina to Mecca and thence to both Jeddah and Taif. God willing, this line will be so completed. The line is not only necessary to carry pilgrim traffic, but also for reasons of internal security.

Extensive harbour works are required at Jeddah, both to render it a safer anchorage for ships, and to make the landing of the pilgrims an easier affair. The beach there could be made more presentable, and arrangements made for a better supply of drinking water and the provision of electricity. Two hospitals should be built, one of which should be reserved for contagious diseases, and at least two large hamums (Turkish baths) should be constructed. One could be devoted to religious rites and the other supplied with sea water. It is a matter of great regret to me that there are no public baths for the use of pilgrims.

A definite educational programme should be inaugurated, and primary schools built and equipped in the latest style; but slow progress only could be made in this direction until the people become accustomed to the idea. A School of Commerce should be established in Jeddah, since merchants from every corner of the world gather there together during the annual pilgrimage. In addition,

A Prince of Arabia

there should be Schools of Art and Science in both Mecca and Jeddah. The Courts of Law require a thorough purge and a searching examination into the methods employed; and the state of the prisons should be improved and made more sanitary.

In order to prevent cholera and plague no pilgrims should be admitted into the country without a certificate of health, and a special Medical Board should be organized with proper facilities of quarantine. Those who desire to enter the country for purposes other than the Haj during the pilgrimage season should be refused admittance. As the money brought by the pilgrims is essential for the very existence of the country, so, therefore, is the pilgrims' health of paramount importance to the Hedjaz. Their safety and health should be assured when they come to worship their God in the Holy Places. The large amount of rubbish that some pilgrims bring with them should be dumped into the sea before they are allowed to land, and thus the germination of infection would be lessened. Mobile hospitals are, I consider, essential, and those who fall sick on the road could then be properly tended and cared for. The excitement of many pilgrims on arrival in the Holy Land is sometimes of such intensity that a number succumb to heart attacks. The necessary medical attention should be at hand.

A large, wide, sheltered road should be constructed from Jeddah to Mecca and trees planted on either side. There are many kinds of trees which would flourish in this country. Fresh water should be led down one side of the road and large fountains producing filtered water should be erected every 1,000 metres. Guard houses are required at frequent intervals along this road and bodies of police should be stationed in them. Thus the country would be beautified, and rest, security and comfort accorded those who come to praise and worship their God.

Proper protection should be provided at the spots where robbers might and do collect, and police patrols in automobiles and mounted on camels should maintain constant watch along the road. The road itself should be kept in a high state of efficiency and be regarded as a marvel of beauty by all Moslems. Whereas 100,000 pilgrims now visit the Hedjaz at any one season, 200,000 would soon be encouraged and in time, perhaps, even a million would be attracted.

In Mecca, the centre to which most attention should be paid is, of course, the Harem Sheref, which needs careful and reverent repair. Electricity should be supplied, and the outskirts of the Mosque should be gradually cleared of all that is inappropriate. Bronze gates should be erected at the entrance, and I would like to see the Harem Sheref

The Balkan War

illuminated throughout the night, and left open for worship at any hour. Liberty and justice should be so conspicuous that Mecca could be held up as an example to the whole Moslem world. Mecca is the centre of worship, and no evil establishment should be permitted in the vicinity. Thoughts of God and the spiritual conception of life should predominate.

Medina, like Mecca, should be treated in a similar manner. The immediate vicinity of the Tomb should be cleaned, and a magnificent fountain, worthy of its surroundings, should be in continuous action. Round the buildings of the Tomb should be a large garden with trees and flowers, a *maidan* with numerous fountains and thence a good road leading to the town. There is plenty of water in Medina, and this plan could be carried out without much difficulty.

Then there is Taif, the district of which is remarkably fertile. The town could be brought up to date with every modern convenience. This is the twentieth century and people desire amusement, and Taif should be regarded as a resort for pleasure. Cinemas and theatres should be built there, telephones and electricity installed, modern villas should be constructed with every luxury and surrounded by well cultivated gardens. Although everything that civilization can produce should be utilized in transforming Taif, yet it must be remembered that it is an Arab town and that the Arab style in everything should be maintained. The climate of Taif is perfect and it could be turned into a health resort for every race. A university should be founded either in Taif or at Jehel Kara, where every branch of education, engineering, medicine, law and theology could be represented. The establishment of this university has been my ambition since childhood and may God grant that my ambition may be realized.

The tribes need much education and all Shereefs should be obliged to attend school so that they may free themselves from their abominable ignorance. A railway line should be constructed from Taif to Basra and, if possible, to Damascus as well. If God would only give me the opportunity to do all these things! I have planned and thought about them all my life.

The majority of these schemes had, alas, to be shelved, because the Ottoman Empire was now in imminent danger from another quarter. Reference has already been made to the extravagant promises made to the Christian populations in the Balkans by the Young Turks when they came into power; promises which were incapable of fulfilment without separation, and they had therefore to be modified. The Great

A Prince of Arabia

Powers, fearful lest a strong Turkey would ruin their plans of expansion, had sought to fan the discontent caused by the granting of reasonable privileges which did not go far enough to satisfy the more militant among the Christian elements—a condition inevitable when an attempt is made to carry out reforms. Disaffection grew, and the reply of the Young Turks was to withdraw what they had given, and oppress their non-Moslem subjects with even greater severity than they had experienced in the worst days of Abdul Hamid. Ottoman officials became as corrupt and rapacious as ever, and there was no security for life or property.

The rivalry which had existed in the past between the different Balkan States had prevented an effective combination against Turkey. The difficulties, however, in which Turkey found herself with Italy, added to the ever increasing misrule in the former country, encouraged the Balkan States, for a moment, to forget their differences and prepare for a struggle which, by this time, had become inevitable.

In the autumn of 1912 the Balkan Powers presented to the Porte an ultimatum which made it essential for Turkey to come to terms with Italy. A treaty of peace was signed on the 15th October 1912 by which the Porte agreed to withdraw its troops from Tripoli, and thus recognized the acquisition of that province by Italy. Italy, on the other hand, agreed to withdraw from the islands in the Aegean Sea which she had occupied—a promise which, in fact, she did not carry out. Hostilities with the Balkan States had commenced on the 8th October, and were followed by a series of crushing defeats for the Turkish army. This was due, principally, to the complete absence of any arrangements for feeding the troops who thereupon became demoralized. It was the rule, rather than the exception, for the troops to be left three or four days without food. Another cause was the large number of conscripted Christians in the Ottoman army, whose sympathies were all in favour of the enemy.

In the Balkan wars the Shereef Ali Haider had no direct interest. He naturally regretted the circumstances that surrounded them, and was appalled at the excesses committed by Turkish officials. Nevertheless, he regarded Turkey as the

The Balkan War

Mother Country of an essentially Moslem Empire, and it was no concern of his if certain Christian elements reverted to other States to which, perhaps, they more properly belonged. Hence the allusions to the Balkan wars in his diaries are scarce, and in a few words only he describes the state of affairs on his return from Medina.

A few months after I had returned to Stamboul, peace was made with Italy, and both Benghazi and Tripoli were ceded to her. I wondered what was going to happen to all those who had served the Turkish Government in those provinces in an official capacity, but I felt that the question of the future of Tripoli was by no means settled. I have always maintained that, once Turkey lost Tripoli, it would only be a question of time before she lost the whole of Arabia as well. One Cabinet of the Young Turks had fallen and the nation was discontented. Without a doubt, the Government was in a difficult and dangerous position that required bold and honest leadership. Various Balkan States now put forward demands from the Ottoman Empire, and Montenegro had already declared war. It looked as if the others would follow suit, and I prayed God to bring matters quickly to a peaceful conclusion.

It will be remembered that one of the objects of the Shereef's pilgrimage to Medina was to enquire into, and report on, the conditions in Syria, and the views of those who aspired for a greater share in the control of their own government. In the drawing up of his report he had been assisted by his brother, Jaffer Pasha. It was unfortunate that Turkey should have been so preoccupied with her own troubles nearer home, but the Shereef, nevertheless, took an early opportunity to visit the Grand Vizier with his recommendations.

I seized an early opportunity to visit the Grand Vizier, Hakki Pasha, and we spoke about my journey, the impressions I had gleaned and the suggestions made by Hazim Bey, the Governor of Beirut, and others.

He looked thoughtful, took his fez in his hands and closed his eyes. Then he spoke: "It's no use. We have insufficient money in the Treasury to endow schools as the French have done. As for appointing provincial governors for each of the three vilayets, it would signify that we recognized frontiers between them, and that would be bad policy." He smiled sarcastically at the ideas of Hazim Bey. I told

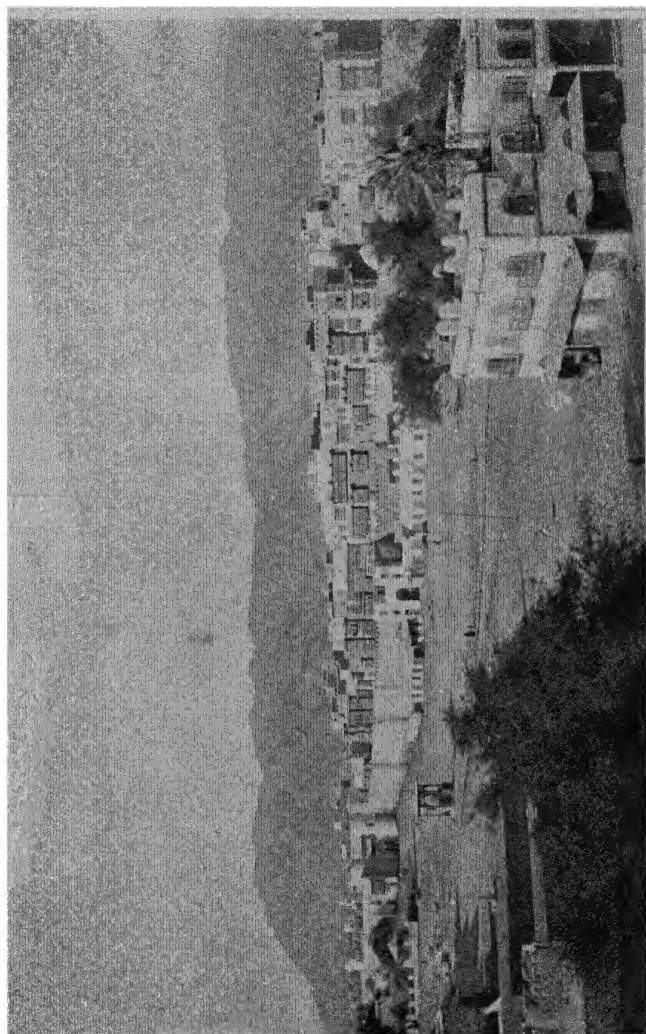
A Prince of Arabia

him that the Sultan, himself, ought to visit Syria and other parts of Arabia, and then took my leave of him with regret. It was a great misfortune that these men in power never paid any heed to my representations, nor attached any importance to Arabia. So God took Arabia from them.

To Talaat Bey, Minister of the Interior, I said that the most important question was to secure internal peace in Syria, but he replied that when my brother returned with his report we would all meet together, consider the situation in all its aspects, and then decide upon the best action to be taken. When my brother arrived we held many meetings, but nothing was ever decided, and no action was taken to ameliorate the conditions of the suffering people in Syria. I imagined that the Government put no faith or credence in our reports, which upset me. As a man I liked Talaat Bey, and we were very great friends; his respect and affection for me was most sincere, but I could not understand why he never attempted to find a remedy for the evils of which we made him aware.

In spite of the disappointment, which Ali Haider records, at the way in which his recommendations were received, his constant representations did make the Turkish Government take some sort of action. Although Turkey was reeling under the shock of the Balkan wars, it was nevertheless considered that something should be done to conciliate the Arabs if they were not to become involved in trouble from another direction. So a National Assembly was convened in Beirut at the end of 1912, but its proceedings were annulled a few months later by Shevket Pasha when he became Grand Vizier. Later on, Arabs, including the most militant reformers, were given more seats in the Turkish Senate or lucrative appointments in the Civil Service. Thus the Turks succeeded in buying off their opponents, but on the main points at issue they continued to temporize, and Syrian demands received no substantial satisfaction. From this time, the situation in Syria was watched with special vigilance from Paris, because France desired to have a prior claim to any commercial concessions both in Syria and Palestine.

In other parts of the Empire discontent was causing trouble to the Turks, and a minor insurrection had flared up in the Yemen. On the situation in that country the Young Turk



Medina, with fountain erected by the Shereef Ali Haider in centre

The Balkan War

leaders sought the advice of Ali Haider, who never minced his words when plain speaking was required, nor ceased to advocate that lasting settlements could only be laid on a basis of absolute honesty.

One day Talaat came to see me with the President of the Committee of Union and Progress. They told me they desired my advice on some particular question. "You are welcome: speak," I said.

"The situation in the Yemen," said Talaat, "is causing anxiety, and recently matters there have become much worse. What action do you advise us to take?"

"Every action you have so far taken in the Yemen," I declared, "has been thoroughly bad. You have not done a single thing to improve the conditions of the people, and all you have achieved with your troops and your guns is an orgy of cruelty and oppression, murder, banishments and imprisonments. You have brought every kind of evil to a country where, for years, you have shed innocent blood. Have you ever asked the people what they want, and what kind of government they prefer? Have those in authority out there any idea of what is really required?"

"No," replied Talaat.

"Send out someone with an honest conscience," I continued, "who will work with sincerity, and let him conduct the necessary enquiry."

Talaat appeared pleased with my outspoken remarks and, after this conversation, spoke to all of his appreciation of my friendship. On the question of the Yemen my advice was followed, and Izzet Pasha was sent to Sanaa, where he managed to prevail upon the Imam to sign a treaty, the results of which were beneficial to all concerned. For some time the Yemen gave no further trouble to the Turkish Government and when, later, trouble did recur, it was due solely to insufficient attention being paid to the needs and desires of the people.

With those in authority the Shereef never ceased to press the necessity for a consideration of affairs in Arabia, and urged that a state visit from the Sultan would do much to show the people that Turkey had a genuine interest in their welfare. He continually pleaded for more attention to be paid to the growing sense of nationalism in the Arab-speaking countries, and prophesied that if they were neglected the inevitable result would be secession. He believed that the Turks could reform the administration in a practical manner if they so chose, and was firmly convinced that the prosperity of his country could

A Prince of Arabia

only be assured under the control of an *enlightened* Ottoman Empire. At the same time he was quite honest about the fact that the continuation of Ottoman control would be to his own personal advantage. From what he knew, it was obvious to him that Hussein would take the first opportunity he could to break away from the Turks, and he believed that the only result would be to plunge Arabia into a more chaotic condition than ever.

Ali Haider's conviction that it was in the best interest of Arabs to remain within the Ottoman orbit probably accounts for his continued loyalty to the Turks in spite of the disgust he often felt over their methods and corruption. He constantly maintained that a federation of Arab States bound by the Turkish Caliph offered the best means of civilized progress, and he visualized an empire on the same lines as the British Commonwealth and working in harmony with it.

He appreciated that the Arabs were too uneducated and inexperienced to direct the government of their countries and feared that, if the different States of their countries broke up into separate units, they would quickly fall a prey to the conflicting interests of other Powers. In the meantime the Shereef urged, and used all his influence to encourage, the appointment of Arabs to important administrative positions where they would learn responsibility and qualify for the tasks of raising the general standards of their people. By reciprocal faith and service, Ali Haider believed that Turks and Arabs would benefit each other and make the Ottoman Empire a stabilizing factor in the councils of the world.



1912-1916

The End of the Balkan Wars

Intrigues in the Hedjaz

Outbreak of the First World War

CHAPTER NINE

END OF THE BALKAN WARS

SOON AFTER ALI HAIDER HAD RETURNED FROM Medina, and before the First Balkan War had broken out, he accepted a position in the Turkish Cabinet as Minister of *Evkaf* (Pious Foundations). This was an important post which carried immense influence over the whole Turkish Empire. It dealt not only with the upkeep and repairs to the mosques and other holy places, but also controlled the large sums of money which had been bequeathed for philanthropic purposes, and also the finances of Moslem Ecclesiastics. In the Young Turk Cabinet the custom was, whenever possible, to nominate a suitable Arab for this position.

His well-known aversion towards an active participation in Turkish politics caused the Shereef to hesitate before he finally accepted, because he well knew the difficulties with which he would have to contend. He was not a man to shirk responsibility, but he realized the extent to which those in power were animated by personal motives, which would jeopardize the smooth running of his Department.

One winter's evening after I had retired to the *harem* to sleep, I was awakened by the sudden call of a visitor, Nejmeddin Mollah, who had expressed an urgent wish to see me. I was surprised at the lateness of his visit, because I knew that no ferry boats crossed the Bosphorus at this hour of the night, and he lived on the other side.

"How did you get here?" I enquired. "Are you now staying on this side of the Bosphorus?"

"No," he replied, "I came over in a special launch from Bechik-tash, and trust that the result of my visit will be of mutual benefit. I come to beg of you to accept, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, the position of Minister of *Evkaf* in the Cabinet of Hakki Pasha."

I declined and made excuses, but he would not listen. At length he said: "I am convinced that you can do some great work for the country by being a member of the Cabinet. Why do you refuse?" So, in the end, I was obliged to accept since there seemed no escape from the persuasion of Nejmeddin. Besides, I liked him. Nevertheless I made my acceptance dependent on the following conditions:

A Prince of Arabia

(a) Whenever I expressed a wish to retire, my resignation must be accepted without any Cabinet discussion.

(b) No political intrigue or idle gossip must be associated with my appointment, nor with the manner of my retirement when I chose to relinquish the position, and

(c) I insisted on being allowed to continue along the same lines as my predecessor, without any change being effected among the staff of the Ministry.

In what a strange way the minds of some men work! Because I had not sought this appointment, those concerned imagined that I would not deign to receive any remuneration for the work involved when I was eventually persuaded to accept. Hence my ministerial honorarium was nil¹ during my tenure of this office. This applied equally to my position as Senator, which I held from the first opening of Parliament in 1908 until its final closure.

In his new office Ali Haider soon found that his fellow Ministers were more interested in petty intrigue and personal gain than they were in their responsibilities to the country, and he became disgusted at the manner in which important affairs of State were neglected. On matters concerning Arabia they refused to pay any attention, the Grand Vizier complacently declaring that such questions could easily afford to wait. Money allocated to departments would be grossly misappropriated, and only by the strictest watch could Ali Haider ensure that the budget for the *Evkaf* was devoted to the purpose for which it was intended.

So it is not surprising that he soon lost interest in all but those things which chiefly concerned him, such as the repair and cleaning of mosques, the collection of antiques, manuscripts and carpets for the *Evkaf* museum. But his position grew more and more unbearable because his actions were surrounded by suspicion and lack of confidence. So, nine months after he had accepted the post, he tendered his resignation, and the Sultan, in recognition of his services, conferred on the Shereef the coveted Order of Osmanieh, First Class. Ali Haider's criticism of the Government, however, was severe.

My successor also found that interference and petty intrigue prevented him again and again from accomplishing that on which he had set his heart. There appeared to be such lack of harmony between

End of the Balkan Wars

the different leaders that they consumed each other's vitality and efforts.

The inevitable concomitant of any revolution is that, sooner or later, the original leaders fall out between themselves and wreck, or at least weaken, the principles on which their original schemes of reform had been built. Perhaps, one much stronger than the rest rises to a dictatorial position over the corpses of those who had helped him to power or, as is more often the case, the original leaders split up into groups, each of which endeavours to grasp every bit of power into its own hands. Their energies, previously directed towards reform for the benefit of the community, are deviated to the destruction of their political opponents. The acquisition of power is apt to destroy the soul of a man more than anything else and, in the case of revolutionaries, encourages greed, and a desire to turn the position they have attained to their own personal profit.

When judged by the standards of other revolutionaries the Young Turks behaved with moderation; but when judged by the standards of a decent democracy their behaviour was most unsavoury. In the words of the Shereef:

Quarrels between various political factions grew in intensity, and the nation suffered from the nebulous activities of a weakened government. Policy, both internal and foreign, had no direction and everything was in confusion.

Kiamil Pasha, a man of administrative experience, had been one of the first Grand Viziers after the revolution, but it was not long before friction arose between him and the younger members of the Committee of Union and Progress. This was due to a variety of causes which are unnecessary to specify in detail. It was believed that some particularly near and influential members of his family had become the instruments of reactionary and separatist groups, but the principal point at issue was the relationship of Kiamil Pasha with Great Britain, whose Press had indulged in a violent campaign against the Young Turks. It was believed by the supporters of Kiamil that, if he retained the Grand Vizierate, England would prevent the loss to Turkey of a single foot of territory. The British Press, however, commenting on the series of defeats

A Prince of Arabia

sustained by the Turkish forces at the opening of the First Balkan War, gave a cruel denial to these affirmations of the partisans of Kiamil Pasha who was, thereupon, forced to resign. England, having a complex system of interests to safeguard, was not disposed to play the role of blind champion to the desires of Kiamil Pasha.

Internally the government of his Cabinet had proceeded to the extremes of arbitrariness in political persecution; diplomatically and in the military sense, the only practical result of its activity was a series of disasters without precedent in Turkish history. Although Kiamil had several eminent qualities of statesmanship he was also infected with an ardent desire for power. This was the key to his political ruin.

Another great figure at this time was Mahmoud Shevket Pasha, the soldier who had saved the Young Turk Party from the counter revolution of 1909. He belonged to a group over which Germany had considerable influence, but was nevertheless a patriot of the highest order. "I am not a devoted friend of Germany, nor a bitter enemy of England," he is reported to have said. "I am only a Turkish patriot. That my sympathies go out towards the German people I freely admit. I am well acquainted with them. Is it wrong that I should be drawn towards the greatest military nation of the globe? At the same time I favour a friendly understanding with Great Britain."

Mahmoud Shevket's success was due largely to his friendship with Von der Goltz and other German officers. His qualities as a statesman and organizer, however, were not equal to those as a warrior. Hence he was ever a tool in the hands of more clever politicians who were endowed with gifts of vision, resourcefulness and will power. For a time he was the idol of the army but, as Minister of War, his popularity decreased, and towards the end of 1912 he was forced to sacrifice himself in order to save the face of the Cabinet. He was succeeded by General Nazim Pasha whom he had previously arbitrarily removed from the Turkish Capital. Mahmoud Shevket, however, continued in the political arena as a senator.

The Shereef Ali Haider had a great admiration for Mahmoud Shevket which ripened into a sincere friendship.

End of the Balkan Wars

In spite of his failings he had a quality which appealed to the Shereef, and that was his honesty.

After Mahmoud Shevket had ceased to be Minister of War, he visited me two or three times a week. This attracted the attention of certain people among whom intrigue began to manifest itself. Although the deposition of Abdul Hamid had brought to an end many of the abuses associated with the Court, yet the pernicious system of spying, and the feeling of mistrust which it engendered, had not been wholly eradicated. 'Journals' were still written by evil-minded people who hoped to curry favour with those in power, or who desired to harm a rival or political adversary. Such 'journals' were now forwarded about the visits paid to me by Mahmoud Shevket, and we felt the insecurity of our position acutely. In our conversations, however, we took care to avoid the discussion of individuals, confining our talks more to the events of international importance which were taking place. Turkey was now deeply embroiled in the Balkan Wars, and I feared that she would be unable to hold her own against the numerous enemies who assailed her.

One day Mahmoud Shevket astonished me by saying: "Shereef, I was very largely responsible for the fact that you were not appointed to the Emirate of Mecca, and I regret it; but, one day, God willing, you will obtain your rights."

"In what way were you responsible?" I queried.

"A year or two ago the Minister of the Interior, Hadji Adil Bey, stated that he considered it prejudicial to our interests to allow Hussein to remain Emir, and he wished him to be deposed in your favour. But I deprecated this suggestion; hence, no action was taken."

I was surprised, since Hadji Adil Bey had never spoken to me on this subject, but I was gratified at the open manner in which Mahmoud Shevket had thus spoken to me. It increased my respect and affection for him. I had been acquainted with Mahmoud Shevket from the time he was a young Colonel, but it was only at this time that I really got to know him. The more I saw of him the more I liked him, and I was impressed by his fidelity, his readiness to sacrifice everything for his principles, his knowledge and ability, and his unflagging energy. I regarded him as one of the greatest men I had been privileged to meet, and I was proud that the country could produce men of his calibre. He knew how to extract every advantage offered by the Germans and, at the same time, to keep the good will of the British. He always considered it a duty to allow no friction to

A Prince of Arabia

spoil the relationship between Turkey and Great Britain, and invariably admired the foresight of British statesmen.

On the 3rd December 1912, at the instance of the Great Powers, an armistice was agreed upon between Turkey and the Balkan States. Whilst the situation was entirely favourable to the Allies, the armistice came at a moment when the war had achieved no final result, for not only had the attack on Constantinople been attended with failure, but Yannina, Scutari and Adrianople were still in Turkish hands. The Allies immediately claimed the whole of European Turkey, except the territory bordering on the Dardanelles and closely surrounding Constantinople, Bulgaria insisting on the possession of Adrianople. After a month spent in almost useless discussions, the Powers, for once united, presented a joint Note to the Porte, advising the cession of Adrianople and hinting that renewed hostilities might lead to the loss of Constantinople. Kiamil Pasha was prepared to agree to these terms but, on the 23rd January, a revolt, which Ali Haider describes, took place in Constantinople.

Many in the Cabinet were prepared to accept the cession of Adrianople to the Bulgarians, but this was opposed by the more militant of the Young Turk Party. A serious incident occurred on the 23rd January when a deputation, headed by Enver Bey, insisted on entering the Chamber, where the Council of Ministers were deliberating on this question, with the object of protesting against the surrender of Adrianople. On being refused admittance they used force: shots were fired; Nazim Pasha, the Minister of War, and his A.D.C. were killed, and the Grand Vizier was terrorized into resignation. In his place Mahmoud Shevket was appointed Grand Vizier. He refused to surrender Adrianople.

The war was accordingly renewed, and Turkey sustained a further succession of defeats which included the capture of Adrianople by the Bulgarians on the 28th March. After these serious reverses the Porte was desirous to come to terms, and invited mediation of the Great Powers. A second Conference was held in London, but the four States so lately in alliance against the common enemy, Turkey, were now madly jealous of one another in the division of the spoils. On the 29th June

End of the Balkan Wars

the Bulgarian army in Macedonia made a sudden and unprovoked attack on the Greek and Servian outposts. This treacherous action was followed by further Bulgarian advances which were, however, checked a few days later. Early in July, the Bulgarians were heavily defeated and compelled to retreat towards their own frontier.

Out of the scramble that ensued, the Turks saw the opportunity of retrieving something of their recent great losses, and an army under Enver Pasha had no difficulty in recovering the important city of Adrianople from which the Bulgarians had withdrawn nearly the whole of their garrison. An armistice was agreed to on the 31st July and, at the subsequent Conference, peace was signed. Turkey had recovered Adrianople, Demotika and Kirk Kilisse, and this redounded to the credit of the Young Turks and Enver Pasha, who soon became Minister of War.

Thus ended the Balkan Wars which would probably never have occurred had the Young Turks made any attempt to inaugurate even some of the reforms which they had promised, and had the Great Powers been united in their endeavours to insist upon the introduction of those reforms, and the maintenance of peace. The unexpected result of the Wars, however, secured Mahmoud Shevket in the Grand Vizierate, where his admiration for the sterling qualities of Ali Haider prompted him to prevail on the Shereef to accept a seat in the Cabinet as Leader of the State Council. But the Shereef had had enough of Turkish politics.

Soon after his appointment as Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Shevket sent his brother, Hichmet Bey,* to ask me if I would accept the position of Leader of the State Council, but I refused. I was heartily sick of the wranglings and intrigues of Turkish politicians, and I felt that the less I mixed myself up in political affairs the better it would be. I was frankly disgusted at the way in which affairs were being conducted, and the different factions into which the Young Turk Party had split seemed to be largely animated by personal considerations. No attempt had been made to put into force many of the reforms which had been proposed, whilst every practical scheme

* Hichmet Bey was Prime Minister of Iraq for a few months in 1937 until the assassination of General Bakir Sidqi in August.

A Prince of Arabia

remained almost a dead letter. No; I was determined to have as little as possible to do with Turkish politics, and was glad I had never been directly connected with the Young Turk Party.

One day, when Mahmoud Shevket came to see me at Chumlijah, he spoke of the 'journals' which had been written against me in the past. He had found some in the desk of his predecessor, Kiamil Pasha. He had brought two with him, and in one it was stated that committees of the more chauvinistic Young Turks had been accustomed to meet in my house. This was a faction of the Young Turk Party opposed to Kiamil Pasha. Of course, no such thing had ever occurred as I was never a member of this Society, although I had personal friends who did belong to it. But equally had I friends in the opposition parties including, I thought, Kiamil Pasha himself. In fact he had often visited me, our friendship being of long standing. In his younger days he had loved my grandfather, and it was therefore difficult to understand how he could possibly accept and believe 'journals' against me.

CHAPTER TEN

OUTBREAK OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

THE POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS OF MANY MEN holding responsible positions in Turkey at this period were undoubtedly actuated by personal motives, and it was this that so disgusted the Shereef. A study of contemporary historians of different shades of opinion bears out this fact most forcibly. The lust for power gripped the souls of the most able men, and personal jealousies made them neglect the best interests of their country. On the one hand, there were Enver, Djemal and Talaat; Pashas dominated by the outstanding personality of Mahmoud Shevket, but resolved to obtain greater power than ever; on the other hand there was a host of political intriguers jealous of those in power, and determined to overthrow them by fair means or foul. It would be unjust to accuse the principal and better known leaders of the Young Turks as being devoid of patriotic motives. They certainly were not, and their original scheme of reforms showed to what extent the best interests of their country dominated their earlier actions. Perhaps they lacked tact, for they were men, also, who roused an incredible amount of jealousy in others; so much so that personal rivalry eventually became the dominant issue. In other words, the political elements in Turkey could not, nor would, work together. Hence policy was apt to be indefinite, and political murder stained the escutcheons of the reformers.

In opposition to Enver, who subsequently became the virtual ruler of Turkey, was Kiamil Pasha, who had been forced to resign his position as Grand Vizier after the *coup d'état* of 23rd January, and retire to Egypt for 'reasons of health.' Conspirators abounded, prepared to plot for the return of Kiamil, and many of these conspirators were close to the Imperial Family. This is perfectly understandable, since the more advanced of the Young Turks were accused of desiring to limit still further the already restricted powers of the Sultan.

A Prince of Arabia

Kiamil had the sympathies of both Great Britain and France; and Djemal Pasha as Military Governor of Constantinople in 1913 accused the British Embassy of bringing pressure to bear on Mahmoud Shevket, then Grand Vizier, to allow Kiamil to reside in Stamboul when he suddenly returned from Egypt early in June. To Djemal, the return of Kiamil signified the proximity of a *coup d'état*, with the object of making him Grand Vizier over the corpse of Mahmoud Shevket. These fears were not groundless, for a few days later, on the 15th June, Mahmoud Shevket was murdered in the Bayazid Square on his way to the Sublime Porte. Prompt and effective measures were taken to capture the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and the final result was to seat the party to which Enver belonged more securely in the saddle of State.

The new Grand Vizier, Said Hallim Pasha, was little more than a respectable figurehead and, though the Cabinet included other influential members of the Committee of Union and Progress, such as Talaat, who was Minister of the Interior and Djavid who was Minister of Finance, yet Enver Pasha as Minister of War was the real ruler of Turkey.

Again the Shereef was offered the Leadership of the State Council by Said Hallim, and again he refused. In his description of the political situation, the reason for his refusal is not far to seek.

In Mahmoud Shevket, Turkey had lost a great man, and many of his schemes, if they had been carried out, would have proved of lasting benefit to the country. It was impossible to retain the steady and wise influence which had been exerted by the late Grand Vizier. There seemed to be so much apathy shown by those in responsible positions, that I despaired of any real constructive policy ever being adopted about anything. Their pride and self-glorification made it look as though the whole Islamic world would crash, with no one strong enough to save it.

Although peace had been signed in the Balkans, echoes of discontent still reached Stamboul from the more extended portions of the Ottoman Empire and, towards the end of 1913, disquieting reports were received from the Hedjaz. This province was only held loosely by the Turks, who never tried

Outbreak of the First World War

to govern it in the same way as they exercised control over Syria. The Grand Shereef of Mecca, Hussein, was allowed to do much as he pleased, and the duties of the Turkish Military Governor were principally to watch and report any activity which might be injurious to the Porte. Hussein, therefore, had by no means the same excuses as, for instance, the Syrians to create trouble, but he was vain and ambitious, and craved for more personal power. From the very first day of his appointment to the Emirate he had contemplated rebelling against his sovereign.

It was natural for the Shereef Ali Haider to show the keenest interest in what was taking place in his own country, and to look for the recognition of his rights if Hussein should be deposed. Hussein, however, had many influential friends in Turkey—including the Grand Vizier, Said Hallim—who were not well disposed towards Ali Haider. It will be remembered that the family of Devi-Aoun, to which Hussein belonged, owed their position to Mohammed Ali of Egypt, and his descendants regarded them as their protégés. Said Hallim was a grandson of Mohammed Ali. The Shereef Ali Haider records the effects of the reports of Hussein's activities on the Turkish Cabinet, and their sequel.

At this period reports were received from the Hedjaz concerning the activities of Hussein, which caused the Government to doubt both his loyalty and reliability. A thorough investigation into the truth of these reports was carried out by Talaat Pasha and other members of the Government, as a result of which the removal of Shereef Hussein from the Emirate of Mecca was strongly advocated. But the Grand Vizier stated that, in his opinion, however advisable it might appear, such a step would lead to endless complications of an international character at the present time. He stated, nevertheless, that he intended to send a member of his own entourage to warn Hussein and tell him exactly what the Government thought of the policy he was pursuing.

This warning had no effect on Hussein, and the situation in the Hedjaz grew from bad to worse. Enver Bey thereupon decided to act, and made arrangements to embark a regiment of soldiers at Smyrna, land in the Hedjaz and bring about the deposal of Hussein. When a certain Cherouk Soulu Mahmoud, himself a member of the

A Prince of Arabia

Cabinet, heard about this projected military excursion he immediately went to see the Grand Vizier to protest. Said Hallim, however, denied all knowledge of such an expedition, and became seriously alarmed at the prospect. He saw Talaat and enquired if he knew anything about it.

"Of course I do," he replied, "I am of the same opinion as Enver and consider the expedition to be essential." Together they saw Enver, who pointed out the simplicity of the action he proposed to take, and expressed surprise that the Grand Vizier should be so perturbed at the idea.

"We want a loan of 3,500,000 lira from the French Government," explained Said Hallim, "and if they heard of this contemplated military movement they would immediately jump to the conclusion that we were about to embark on another war, and perhaps refuse to give the loan in consequence. I implore you to call off this expedition and wait until we get this money. Then we can act as you please."

The question was therefore one of money, and many in the Cabinet supported the Grand Vizier's contention. There were others who said, however, that if Hussein remained Emir, it could only bring disaster to the Turkish Government. Much discussion took place, but I myself refused to descend to intrigue in order to bring about the downfall of Hussein.

Without doubt Ali Haider was bitterly disappointed that the action desired by Enver and Talaat in the Hedjaz had not materialized. Among the leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress the Shereef looked to Talaat as a friend who would always champion his rights and, over this particular question, he felt that Talaat could have done much more. So he wrote him a long letter of protest (dated 3rd March 1914).

Talaat is understood to have replied saying that the question of his appointment to Mecca in place of Hussein would be considered by the Government; and he followed up his note by a personal visit. It may be supposed that the question of Hussein's deposal hinged round the loan the Turkish Government hoped to obtain from France, but Talaat is believed to have counselled his removal irrespective of the effect it might have had on France.

The state of Turkish finance was critical, and negotiations for this vital loan had reached a delicate position which the



H.H. Shereef Mohiddin

[Second son of Ali Haider]



H.E. Talaat Pasha

Outbreak of the First World War

deposal of Hussein might ruin. The loan, however, never materialized, since Turkey had exhausted almost all her credit with both France and Great Britain; yet the question of Ali Haider's appointment was shelved indefinitely. Money, however, was soon forthcoming to swell the exchequer of the Turkish Government, for Germany suddenly opened her purse with an alacrity which ought to have made Turkey suspicious of what lurked behind such apparently disinterested friendship and generosity. Thus was forged another link in the Turco-German alliance which was finally signed on 2nd August 1914 to coincide with the commencement of the first World War.

Among the terms of the alliance there was an agreement that Egypt, though nominally still under the suzerainty of the Sultan, should be given a German administration and become practically a German Colony. In exchange for this concession Turkey was to receive all the money that she, or rather Enver Pasha, required. Enver Pasha was ultimately to become life Governor of Egypt, and Abbas Hilmi retired into private life with a handsome pension. The German Emperor was determined to lend to weak, tottering Turkey and to her unprincipled Government all the aid possible, as he believed that Turkey alone, by calling on the forces of Islam all over the world, could shatter the foundations of the British Empire.

Towards an alliance with Germany the Shereef was always opposed, and was convinced that only by means of a friendly understanding with Great Britain could prosperity and stability be assured throughout the Ottoman Empire. But popular opinion, German diplomacy, and mistakes by the Entente Powers, all worked together to defeat these efforts of the Shereef. It was constantly impressed upon the people that the occupation of Constantinople and that portion of Turkey in Europe was the cherished dream of Russia, which would be realized if the Entente Powers proved victorious, and that Great Britain, by reason of her understanding with Russia, could never be regarded as a true friend of Turkey. Hence a weak Turkey was to their interest, whereas Germany appeared to be the only Great Power who desired to see Turkey really strong. This conviction was strengthened by Great Britain commandeering the *Sultan Osman* and *Reschadieh*,

A Prince of Arabia

the two Turkish warships built by Vickers Armstrong, for which the Ottoman Government had already paid. Although the British Admiralty was strictly within its rights, this action was particularly galling to the people, because the greater part of the money required for the construction of these warships had been obtained by popular subscription. While the country was smarting under this blow there arrived off Stamboul the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* which had successfully eluded the British Mediterranean Fleet and, in order to escape an embarrassing situation, Turkish statesmen were prepared to regard them as sold to Turkey in compensation for the two warships commandeered by Great Britain. Thus Turkey was further bound to the policy of Germany.

But there were still many in responsible positions who urged that the country should preserve a benevolent neutrality, and even those most anxious to support the Central Powers desired a delay as long as possible. The hand of Turkey was, however, forced when Enver Pasha, at the instigation of the German Ambassador, ordered the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, which were commanded by German officers although they wore the Turkish ensign, to issue forth into the Black Sea and bombard Odessa. As a result they were attacked by the Russian Fleet. The die was cast; Turkey was forced to declare war in favour of the Allied Powers much to the distress of the Shereef Ali Haider. "You introduce the country into a new partnership," he told Talaat. "Hesitate," he implored, "and think well before you join in a war the end of which cannot be foreseen."

From the time when Germany had first declared war, Turkey had commenced her mobilization, since it appeared obvious that sooner or later she would be drawn into the maelstrom that had been released. Her entry was, however, earlier than was desired even by the most militant in favour of Germany, and the laws of conscription were therefore necessarily severe. Irrespective of whether Ottoman subjects were Moslems, Arabs, Christians or Jews, the State demanded their service, but the Shereef Ali Haider did not see why those Arabs who happened to be domiciled in Turkey should be conscripted, whereas the government did not dare to apply the

Outbreak of the First World War

laws of conscription in their own countries. So the Shereef protested, and eventually obtained the exemption he demanded.

A few days later Talaat came to see me, and we discussed at length both the political and military situation. I suggested that ultimate success would be impossible unless the policy of Turkey suffered a radical change. I did not doubt the military ability of the Germans but, if they were successful—what, I said, would be the result? Turkey would be under the complete control of Germany who would extend her influence as far east as Baghdad, and the Pashas governing the various Arab States would merely be puppets of the German Emperor. I was, however, convinced, I told him, that although England might lose many battles on land, yet she would be victorious in the end because her statesmen were so far-sighted and her Fleet was undefeatable. I expounded my ideas with candour, but little notice was taken of what I said.

The weeks passed and lengthened into months, but the war still continued and the end seemed to be no closer.

As the first World War continued so did the Shereef Ali Haider become more depressed. The contention that it was bound to end within a few months of its commencement in favour of Germany never appealed to him. Though he did not doubt the military ability of the Germans, yet his sympathies had always been with Great Britain, and in his heart he appreciated the value of a powerful fleet more than an enormous army. In fact, the British Fleet meant more to him than the greatest army Germany could ever produce, and he kept himself fully informed about the activities of every unit in the Fleet. On more than one occasion he expressed his interest in the British Navy and stated that, had he been in a position to choose a career, he would have selected that of a seaman.

On the 23rd November 1914 an event of importance and historic significance took place, when the Sultan declared a holy war and, it was reported, caused the green Standard of the Prophet to be unfurled.

According to some authorities the *Sanjak Sherif*, or Sacred Standard, originally served as a curtain for the tent entrance of Ayesha, the favourite wife of the Prophet. The tradition usually accepted is that it was the turban-winder of one of

A Prince of Arabia

Mohammed's converted enemies who had been sent against him by the Chiefs of Mecca during the flight to Medina. Instead of attacking, he threw himself on his knees, unwound his turban and, fixing it to his lance point, dedicated both it and himself to the Prophet's service and glory. It eventually came into the hands of Sultan Selim with the other relics from Mecca, and it was Murad III who realized its political possibilities and used it as an incentive to his army. Henceforth it became a symbol of Ottoman domination, and was only exhibited when either the Sultan or the Grand Vizier joined the field army in person, in the case of national emergencies, or on declaration of war. It is kept sewed within another Standard said to be that of the Caliph Omar, and this again is enclosed in forty different coverings.

The German Emperor rejoiced, and imagined that its effect would be electrical in uniting the Moslem East against orthodox Russia. The world pictured an impressive and enthusiastic ceremony in Stamboul that would kindle the flames of religious fanaticism, but the significance of this event was doubtless exaggerated by many. The Shereef Ali Haider thought so little of it and treated this action of the Sultan with such contempt, that he failed even to record it in his diaries. No great ceremony accompanied this political gesture on the part of the Young Turk leaders, and the actual flag was never even taken from its place and unfurled in public. What did happen was that the deputy from Smyrna, Abed Ullah, took a flag up the line to Konia and into the heart of Turkey, where he used it as an appeal to the more ignorant peasants.

To his family Ali Haider deplored this crude and, to him, sacrilegious appeal, especially when he realized its doubtful possibilities among such a cosmopolitan population as that included in the Ottoman Empire. It is true that some Moslem simpletons rallied to the eloquent appeal of Abed Ullah, but the danger in a display of this nature lay in the adverse effect it might have on the Christian communities in the country. "Why should we fight," they asked, "if the war is to be a *jihad* against our faith?" and the Young Turks were shrewd enough not to press to any great extent the idea of a holy war against the infidels. It was useful for propaganda outside the

Outbreak of the First World War

country, and as an attempt to enlist the sympathies of essentially Moslem countries like the Hedjaz, but the effect was not as great as that anticipated. For a time it encouraged those Moslems in Turkey who had grown sick and tired of the almost continual warfare that the country had waged for years previous, but as an attempt to rouse Islam to the side of the Caliph it was a lamentable failure.

It was with ever increasing pain and regret that Ali Haider now watched the progress of the war. He felt that the life blood of Turkey had been drained for too long a period, and that the people were now being asked to fight merely in order that Germany could extend her influence farther East. "No man objects to fighting in a good cause," he would say, "even if their stomachs are empty, but now they leave their hearths and homes, their fields, their women and their children, for a reason of which they cannot possibly be aware."

The Dardanelles campaign, however, had done much to stiffen the courage and confidence of the Turks, and had wide repercussions throughout the whole world of Islam.

In February 1916 the Heir Apparent, Yusuf Izzedin, a man of some parts and with a will of his own, committed suicide just as he was about to leave Constantinople for Central Europe. He had always been an open enemy of Enver Pasha, and many Turks saw in the manner of his death a grim repetition of the suicide of the Sultan Abdul Aziz in 1876.

The news of the suicide of the Crown Prince, Yussuf Izzeddin Effendi, came to me as a great shock. I hastened to the Palace and expressed my condolences to the Sultan. I did not expect to see him in person, but when he heard that I was in the room of the First Chamberlain he sent word to say that he wished to see me. After the usual salutations had been given, the Sultan asked me what I thought about the young prince who had just died and the circumstances surrounding his death.

"May God forgive his sins," I replied discreetly.

"It was a very bad business indeed," continued His Majesty, "now Vahid-ed-Din,* my brother, becomes the Heir Apparent and I fear he will destroy me."

* Vahid-ed-Din, who succeeded as Mahomet VI on the 3rd July 1918, was not expected to show the same bold front to Enver as Yussuf Izzeddin would have done.

A Prince of Arabia

"Do not let such thoughts interfere with the will of Allah," I replied. "Your knowledge should be sufficient to establish your Faith in the Most High." And I repeated the first part of a verse from the Koran which he completed: "Thou God who possessest all things canst give to whom you desire; Thou art all powerful and to Thee nothing is impossible."

"The following story keeps coming to my mind," he said. "It was the occasion of the great Persian Festival of Spring, Norooze (March 21st) during the reign of the Sultan Moustapha, when the Chief Astrologer delivered his customary gifts, prophecies and talismans to members of the Imperial Family. The tray bearing the offering to the Sultan was brought before His Majesty, who expressed pleasure at its appearance and anticipation of the prophecies it contained. But a grave mistake had been made by the eunuch, who had delivered the tray intended for the Crown Prince to the Sultan, and that for the Sultan to the Heir Apparent. So, when His Majesty opened the message, he realized the mistake that had been made and was horrified to read: 'Within 40 days you will be Sultan, and I offer you my most sincere congratulations.'

"The Sultan's pleasure turned to anger, and his anger turned to fear. Although the Astrologer was cast into prison with his entire family, yet the anxiety of the Imperial Master increased day by day. Intrigue against him was rampant, and he knew there were many who desired his assassination. To do away with the Crown Prince was difficult, since there were many who supported him, but if poison could be introduced in some unobtrusive manner, then the anxieties of the Sultan would be diminished. So one day some sherbet was prepared, one cup was poisoned, and the Prince was present. It was the time for prayer, the Koran was being read and the Imam had repeated the verse you have just quoted, as a result of which the Sultan became much troubled in his mind. This roused the suspicions of the Prince Hamid Effendi, who declined the sherbet that was offered him and retired from the Presence. Then the Sultan turned to his entourage and expressed a wish that if anything happened to him he hoped that his son Suleiman would be appointed his successor. 'Oh, Sultan,' exclaimed his listeners, 'may God grant you long life and prosperity.' The incident passed but, on the thirty-ninth day after the Astrologer had delivered his message, His Majesty died and Prince Hamid Effendi became Sultan."

"It is a story with real significance," I said.

When I expressed a desire to withdraw, His Majesty said how much he would look forward to our next meeting. Sultan Reched always

Outbreak of the First World War

paid me much attention and was invariably both courteous and kind whenever we met. We had been associated together in many ceremonies. Besides being among the first to offer congratulations on his accession, I had taken a very personal part in the ceremony associated with the girding of the sword of Osman. I was invariably invited to the special readings of the Koran during Ramadan, and nearly always accompanied him when he visited the Holy Relics in the old Palace of Top Capori Serai. He would often discuss with me questions that troubled him, but I took care never to pass any very definite opinion myself on any one or anything.

I always think that Sultan Reched has been much maligned and misunderstood. He was a good Mussulman and, though his outward appearance was heavy and unintelligent, yet, when one got to know him, his more intimate intercourse was lively; he was well read, courteous and, to my mind, fully worthy of the Throne he held. The country did not understand him, and he was unable to do many things on which he had set his heart. When he died many accused him of faults that he had never shown. May God rest his soul!



1916-1918

The Arab Revolt

Ali Haider obtains his birthright as Emir of Mecca

The Defence of Medina

CHAPTER ELEVEN

EMIR OF MECCA

THE FIRST WORLD WAR HAD NOW BEEN IN progress for some eighteen months and, throughout the Ottoman Empire, those movements, many subversive, to which the Young Turk Revolution had given birth, began to stir and move the destinies of the peoples who had been subjected to Ottoman rule for centuries.

"The Young Turk movement was a revolt against the hierarchic conception of Islam, and the pan-Islamic theories of the old Sultan . . . but, in the confidence of their first success, the Young Turks were carried away by the logic of their principles, and as a protest against pan-Islam preached Ottoman brotherhood. The gullible subject races believed that they were called upon to co-operate in building a new East. Rushing to the task they laid down platforms of sweeping ideas, and hailed the Turks as partners. The Turks, terrified at the forces they had let loose, drew the fires as suddenly as they had stoked them. . . . Accordingly, the Arab deputies were scattered, the Arab societies forbidden, and Arab notables proscribed. Arabic manifestations and the Arabic language were suppressed by Enver Pasha more sternly than by Abdul Hamid before him. However, the Arabs had tasted freedom: they could not change their ideas as quickly as their conduct; and the stiffer spirits among them were not easily to be put down. . . . The Arab societies went underground and changed from liberal clubs into conspiracies. . . . Those societies were pro-Arab only, willing to fight for nothing but Arab independence; and they could see no advantage in supporting the Allies rather than the Turks, since they did not believe our assurances that we would leave them free. Indeed, many of them preferred an Arabia united by Turkey in miserable subjection, to an Arabia divided up and slothful under the easier control of several European Powers in spheres of influence."

So writes T. E. Lawrence * in his explanation of the causes

* The Seven Pillars of Wisdom.

A Prince of Arabia

underlying the Arab Revolt; but he presents a somewhat different picture to that described by the Shereef Ali Haider. Of the existence of the Arab secret societies Ali Haider was fully aware, but of their importance in shaping the destiny of his people he had no great belief. Each society, to his mind, was actuated by motives of personal power and independence, and bore little relation towards the establishment of a real and prosperous federation of Arabic speaking peoples. He believed sincerely that the prosperity of Arabia could only be assured if that country remained in the orbit of an enlightened Ottoman Empire, and he endeavoured to direct the energies of all those with whom he came in contact towards the goal of political equality with the Turks. He envisaged an Empire of free and virtually independent States, bound together solely by the power of the Caliph, in the same way as the integral parts of the British Empire are bound together by the Crown of England. He worked for Turkish friendship with Great Britain, of whom he was always an admirer; but the German influence was too strong, and his dreams were never realized.

The least desire of Ali Haider was to see Arabia severed from the Turkish connection as the result of warfare, and he considered that the two countries should always remain close neighbours for mutual security. To young and headstrong Arabs he would say: "You can achieve nothing without force, and it is ridiculous to suppose that you have any. Have patience. The Young Turks are opening a new page in the history of our nation, and all will come right in time. Do not attempt to break away from the Ottoman Empire when the general condition of the world is in a state of upheaval. Why should we shed so much Moslem blood on either side? Now we have a Parliament and if, at first, the representation leaves much to be desired, bide your time. You will soon realize the meaning of Parliament and how, through Parliament alone, you can gain the equality of treatment for which you strive. Then Arabic can be made the language of the schools where Arabs are in the majority. Arabs can obtain equal chances in the Services and a fleet round the coasts of Arabia, manned by Arabs but subservient to the Sultan, can protect the country from external aggression. A second capital can be established

Emir of Mecca

at Baghdad where the Sultan will stay for a fixed period every year and, in the general development of our country, we can show the world what Moslems can contribute. All those parts that are essentially Arab can be developed in conformity with their national characteristics; our art, our language, and our culture can be encouraged to make Arabia a living and powerful factor in the Moslem world."

In spite of these aspirations, the Shereef was not blind to Turkish misgovernment and cruel stupidity, and he was especially loud in his denunciation of the methods employed in Syria, where he suspected Djemal Pasha of designs to make himself a second Mohammed Ali with Syria as his own independent kingdom. According to Lawrence it was the cruelty of Djemal Pasha that united all classes, conditions and creeds in Syria under the pressure of a common misery, and so made a concerted revolt possible. Although the conditions in Syria certainly left much to be desired, yet it is quite possible that the cruelty of Djemal Pasha as one of the causes underlying the Arab Revolt has been much exaggerated, and if the dates of the Revolt are compared with those when the mass executions took place in Syria it will be seen that the Revolt was planned long before. In fact Djemal Pasha himself makes the following significant remark: "I am certain that to the executions in April 1916 alone do we owe the fact that there was no rising in Syria during the two and a half years following Shereef Hussein's declaration of independence."

It has been alleged that the Young Turks employed every means they could to keep the Arab races under subjection, and to deprive the Arab peoples of constitutional outlets. The experiences of the Shereef Ali Haider do not altogether support this contention, although they show that there was a great deal of neglect by the Turks towards their subject peoples. This was due more to personal rivalries and ambitions, which so occupied the minds of the leaders that they did not bother about many of the details necessary for ordered government. Nevertheless, the majority of the Arabs stood by the Caliphate heart and soul.

Efforts were undoubtedly made by the Turkish Government to satisfy the demands of the Arab reformers and, in this con-

A Prince of Arabia

nexion, Djemal Pasha records a conference held just before the war with Abdul Kerim el Halil, delegate of the Arab secret political committee.

"I at once observed," he writes, "that what he desired most of all was that positions of influence in Constantinople should be assigned to certain individuals, and I said to myself gloomily that, judging by the views of these leaders, the Arabian reforms meant nothing more than satisfying the ambitions of a few people who were hankering after offices and dignities. Yet we proceeded to draw up an agreement which enshrined the following principles:

"1. The administrative works to be handed over to the native authorities in accordance with the special law relating to the administration of the vilayets.

"2. The secondary school teaching, and general national school teaching to be in Arabic.

"3. The Arabic tongue to be used for certain legal formalities.

"4. The Arabic text to be appended to summonses as well as criminal and civil judgments.

"5. Petitions to the official authorities to be in Arabic.

"6. Certain Arabs to be appointed to the Senate, the State Council, the Court of Appeal, the staff of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and the Fetvahane. These reforms were subsequently carried out *in toto* after they had received the approval and confirmation of the government."

This desire to meet genuine Arab demands was carried a stage further by Djemal Pasha in Syria during the early part of the war when he claims to have left no stone unturned to create unity of views and sentiments in the Arab countries.

All the Arab leaders he addressed assured Djemal of their devotion and loyalty to the Caliphate; yet later these self-same leaders rose up in revolt. What was the reason? The power that animated the revolt in its earlier stages originated from Mecca, and the Emir Feisal himself was president of more than one secret society of revolutionary Arabs. The Shereef Hussein did not feel secure in the Emirate of Mecca, and he knew of every suggestion that had been put forward in Stamboul with regard to his deposal. If Turkey emerged

Emir of Mecca

victorious, he felt that his position would be even less secure, and if the Central Powers were defeated he also faced disaster. But rebellion at the correct psychological moment, when there was no doubt as to the eventual outcome of the war in favour of the Entente Powers, would be bound to confirm his family in the Emirate. It was only natural that the aspirations of Hussein should find a sympathetic ear with the British authorities, but, without Lawrence and the unlimited gold at his disposal, the revolt would have been doomed to failure. But Hussein hesitated to the last, and the following telegram he sent to Enver Pasha shows that the continuation in power of his family in Mecca was the primary consideration.

"If you want me to remain quiet," it ran, "you must recognize my independence in the whole of the Hedjaz—from Tebbuk to Mecca—and create me hereditary prince there. You must also drop the prosecution of the guilty Arabs, and proclaim a general amnesty for Syria and Iraq."

The propaganda, spread in Syria by the revolutionaries, was designed to point out how great would be the insecurity of the Arab countries were Turkey to be defeated, unless the Arabs themselves struck a blow for their independence. An extract of this propaganda reads as follows: "The world conflagration may shoot sparks into the East, set our country on fire, and consume the innocent with the guilty, the Arabs with the Turks. . . . If the war ended with the victory of the Entente our end would be all the more certain, and would facilitate the solution of the Eastern question by Russia. The Arab territories would be exposed to the same peril as the Turkish. All the more urgent it is for us Arabs to take steps to defend our threatened independence."

Everything was surrounded with a secrecy that was remarkable, where the network of Secret Service was so vast, and when the Revolt actually took place it came as a surprise even to such an astute politician as Djemal.

"It never struck me as possible," he writes, "that a man of Shereef Hussein's experience, a greybeard with one foot in the grave, could be so egoistical and ambitious as to embark upon such an enterprise."

On the 2nd June 1916 Fakhri Pasha, the military governor

A Prince of Arabia

of Medina, reported that the die had been cast, and that the Arab Revolt had begun. Of the effect of this Revolt on the conduct of the war much has been written. It will be sufficient to state here that to this Revolt Djemal Pasha attributed the ability of the British forces to cross the Canal and commence a serious offensive against Palestine.

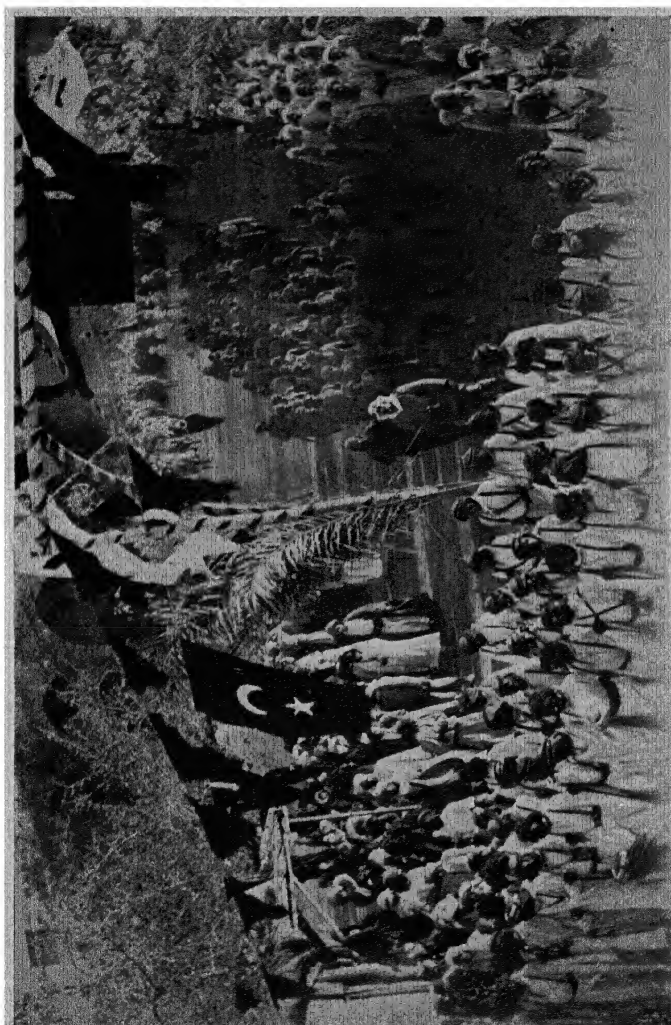
News of the Revolt was quickly flashed to Stamboul, where it caused the utmost indignation. That the Emir who they themselves had appointed, to whom they had given unstinting support, and whose failings they had consistently overlooked, should have rebelled against the Sultan came as a great shock to the Cabinet of the Young Turks. Not even the most ardent sympathizers of Hussein suspected that he would sell his honour for British gold. Even his own brother, Nassir, who afterwards became the confidential adviser of Hussein, denounced the Grand Shereef openly in the Senate, and publicly cursed him.

The Shereef Ali Haider maintained a dignified silence though, as Vice-President of the Senate, he had every right to echo the words of condemnation against his cousin. To him the Revolt came as no surprise: his knowledge of the character of Hussein had led him to anticipate an event of this kind. When it did occur, Ali Haider knew he would be faced with the supreme moment in his life—the official recognition of his rights. How he must have wished that this tardy recognition had not come at a time when Turkey was a catspaw in the hands of Germany, and bitterly embroiled in a war with the nation for whom he had the greatest respect—Great Britain. It was all most unfortunate; but his desire to be of service to his own country dominated every other instinct. He foresaw that the war would end with the defeat of Germany and a consequent period of chaos, but he still maintained that the peace and prosperity of his country could best be assured under allegiance to the Caliph. Independence could grow with education, but allegiance to the Caliph was essential for his conception of a Moslem Empire.

Within a few hours after the news of the Revolt had reached Stamboul, Ali Haider knew that the Government would offer him the Emirate of Mecca. Would its acceptance in any way



His Highness the Emir Shereef Ali Haider, 1916



The arrival of Ali Haider in Medina, 1916
Led by Bedouin and regular troops the Emir advances behind a
large standard [at the back of the picture]

Emir of Mecca

conflict with his principles? Whatever mistakes the Turkish Government had made, and however much he deplored their methods and their friends, Ali Haider was loyal to the Sultan. If he went to the Hedjaz he might be able to restore order in that country and save the useless bloodshed of his countrymen. Hence, when Talaat approached him, Ali Haider was prepared to accept, without hesitation, the Emirate of Mecca.

"Since the Government requires my assistance," I replied, "I will serve my country as a soldier under orders. I will put forward no conditions at the moment but, when the situation has clarified and become more normal, then I will make the retention of my position dependent on certain important considerations which I trust your Government will accept."

"To whatever conditions you make," Talaat replied, "I can assure you that the Government will agree. There is much work for you in the Hedjaz. God willing, everything will be for the best."

"I have seen much of Your Excellency," I continued, "and I know your thoughts as you know mine. You will understand that it is no easy matter for me to undertake this task at the present moment but, because of my love for my country, I will fall in with your desires. I am not ambitious for myself, and do not desire to regain my rights through the shedding of Moslem blood. But, since I see in your Government that every consideration is being shown towards my point of view, I can assure you that I am by no means ungrateful. Some sort of sacrifice is imperative."

Talaat thanked me and telephoned to Enver Pasha, Minister of War, the result of our conversation.

That evening I received a telegram from the Grand Vizier, Said Hallim, asking me to visit him in his *yali* on the following day.

"Shereef Hussein and his sons have rebelled," he said as soon as I arrived. "Feisal is resisting the Army, Ali has fled to Mecca, and communications with Medina are being attacked. On behalf of the Cabinet I now offer you the Emirate."

"Thank you," I replied. "The Government desires my service and I accept; but I trust you will not forget the conditions I intend to make when matters are more settled."

"Do not fear," he said. "The Government appreciates your acceptance of their proposal. We fully realize your justifiable complaints of our conduct towards you in the past, and our sincere wish is now to obliterate their memory."

On the wall of the Grand Vizier's room hung a large portrait of

A Prince of Arabia

his grandfather, Mohammed Ali of Egypt, and, as I gazed upon it, my mind wandered back over the pages of past history, until I was constrained to speak of what was in my mind.

"Your Highness," I said, "I am amazed at the greatness and power of God. How strange it all is! The fall of my own family and the rise of that of Devi-Aoun, to which Hussein belongs, was due entirely to Mohammed Ali. You are his grandson, and I am the great-grandson of the Shereef Ghalib he deposed. Now God has given you the opportunity to rectify and redeem the crime of your grandfather."

He seemed astonished at my remarks and, for the moment, appeared somewhat taken aback. Then he merely said: "Right will always triumph in the end." I changed the conversation and took my leave, while the Grand Vizier went to Yildiz to inform the Sultan of my decision.

In spite of the fact that Hussein was regarded as a traitor in the Turkish Capital, there were still a number of people opposed to the appointment of Ali Haider. These were nearly all allied to the powerful family of Devi-Aoun, who resented the return of the Emirate to a member of the family who had held it for centuries. Among these people was the brother of Hussein, Shereef Nassir, who had condemned the Revolt in no uncertain words. As soon as he heard that Ali Haider had been appointed he approached Talaat Pasha. "I am the man to whom you should give the Emirate," he declared. "If you appoint me, I swear on the Holy Koran that I will bring you the head of my brother Hussein."

"The Turkish Government has its own Emir of Mecca," replied Talaat, "and he is the Emir Ali Haider. If you have the interests of your country at heart, go and perform your service under his standard." Shereef Nassir remained in Stamboul! At the end of the war he considered life would be 'healthier' as a devoted admirer of his brother.

The opponents of Ali Haider were not entirely confined to the family of Devi-Aoun. In his own family, the sons of his uncle were bitterly jealous; they had consistently spread falsehoods about the new Emir who, for his own safety, declined to have any of them included in his entourage.

Emir of Mecca

The government desired Ali Haider to proceed as rapidly as possible to Medina, the headquarters of Fakhri Pasha, the Turkish military commander. It was thought that the presence of the Emir would have a steadying influence on the tribes, who were being tempted by British gold to rally to the side of Hussein; and the possibility was visualized of a check being put to the Revolt in its early stages. The Emir, however, realized that Medina was badly in need of supplies of every description and, before his departure, urged the need of these supplies if his mission was to achieve success.

On the day following my visit to the Grand Vizier, the official announcement of my appointment was made at Bab Ali, and the Government expressed a desire for my departure to be hastened as rapidly as possible. There was much to be done, and many matters with which to deal but, within a week of my appointment, I was ready. On my final visit to the Minister of War, I told Enver Pasha how urgently supplies were needed in Medina, and he assured me that everything required would be found waiting at Damascus. I went to say farewell to the Sultan where I found Prince Mejid Effendi to greet me. We spoke with pleasure of our school days together, and recalled our early friendship for one another. The Sultan showed me much courtesy, and offered me every encouragement in the task that lay ahead.

The ceremony associated with the reading of the official proclamation at Bab Ali was full of colour and pageantry. Crowds thronged the windows and balconies, and all along the route soldiers lined both sides of the streets. The big square was packed, but gendarmes made way for the veiled ladies of the Shereef's household across the pavement into a building where eunuchs led them up the stairs to a specially prepared room facing the whole scene. Immediately under the balcony stood the Shereefs, Princes and Damads in frock-coats. A band was formed up on the opposite side of the road.

The distant sound of clapping, the strains of a march and the sharp clatter of horses hooves on cobblestones slowly increased, merging into one vast roar. A band led the leading detachment of infantry; then the Emir's own bodyguard wearing the Arab *kuffayia* and *aighal*. The Sultan's personal band passed, playing a stirring march, the gold and scarlet of

A Prince of Arabia

their brilliant uniforms gleaming in the sunlight. Then, on high-stepping horses came the Sultan's bodyguard holding lances in their hands, to be followed by the Emir's personal standard—the crescent and moon with "*Allah hu Akbar*" written in gold Arabic lettering on a green background.

Immediately behind the standard followed the Grand Shereef of Mecca. Ali Haider sat alone—simple, grave, dignified—in the open state landau normally reserved for the sole use of the Sultan. On his head he wore the white turban of a Shereef and his black robe, magnificently embroidered in gold, was slashed with the scarlet ribbon of the Order of Osmaniyyeh. On his chest gleamed many decorations. The four horses drawing the landau were richly caparizoned in gold, and the coachman, postillions and those in attendance on either side were conspicuous in uniforms of red, gold and blue with capes slung across their shoulders. Behind came more of the escort, then personal aides on horseback and more open carriages with Ministers of State.

The ladies waved their white-gloved hands and the Emir, noticing the group of Shereefs and Princes, turned his head towards them and salaamed.

At this moment Musbah, the little eight year old daughter of the Shereef who was watching the procession with her mother and the other ladies from the balcony, was suddenly seized with a desire to get closer to the father she adored. She dashed from the balcony down the stairs through the crowd in front of the door. Eunuchs tried to catch her, but her nimble feet and the throng of people made escape easy. She was obsessed with one thought—to catch up with the carriage.

"Stand aside," she ordered the soldiers lining the road. They stared stupidly and obeyed. At last she was level with the carriage.

"Baba, Baba!" she cried. Ali Haider turned, salaamed and smiled. Then he was gone.

A light hand touched Musbah's shoulder. It was one of the Imperial Princes who had followed her.

"Come with me, Shereefa," he said gently, and holding his hand, Musbah allowed herself to be led back to the building from which she had darted, where excited eunuchs escorted

Emir of Mecca

her upstairs to her mother. Princess Fatma understood and embraced the trembling little body.

On the 19th June 1916 a large and distinguished gathering assembled at Haider Pasha railway station to bid farewell to the new Emir of Mecca. The entire Cabinet was present with the exception of the Grand Vizier, and the Sultan was represented by Prince Vahid-ed-Din who was subsequently to succeed him. So, with much ceremony and many expressions of good wishes, Ali Haider set out to claim his birthright; but the train had not got very far before he saw one aspect of the war which profoundly shocked his humane nature.

At Aleppo station I saw, during a short halt, two miserable shadows of men in a corner of the platform. I sent my sons to enquire who they were, and I was informed that they were English prisoners, and in a very pitiful condition. I enquired if I could do anything for them, and they said that for several days they had been without food and would much appreciate a cup of tea. I was shocked at their appearance and left a sum of money for them which I hope they were able to spend on some small comforts. My sons had a short conversation with them and gave them cigarettes. Their clothing was in rags, they were burned the colour of copper and were scarcely recognizable as human beings. I never forgot that painful sight, and wondered how any one could treat men in this manner which showed such a heartless disregard of human suffering. Even though they were enemies of our country we should show that our religion revolts against unnecessary cruelty. When men are at war, they cannot visualize the possibility of ever being friendly again, and they perform acts of which they are for ever ashamed. If only we could follow the dictates of the Holy Koran and fear God in this world, we would be blessed in the life to come: new pages would be opened in history, and a new era of peace and understanding would be established. But, alas, it is not so, and endless cruelty occurs in the name of Civilization. May God, however, grant us sufficient wisdom to recognize the folly of mankind. It was impossible for me, on this occasion, to show all the sympathy I felt, since idle gossip would have provoked misunderstanding. When I saw Djemal Pasha I told him exactly what I thought and tendered strong advice respecting the treatment of prisoners by the Turks.

On arrival at Damascus, the Emir was to encounter suspicion from the Turkish High Command in Syria. This

A Prince of Arabia

was understandable after the way in which they had been betrayed by Hussein, but it did not make the task of Ali Haider any easier. His views were well known, but Djemal Pasha, the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, was not prepared to believe in his scrupulous honesty. In the opinion of the Pasha, an honest man did not exist, especially in wartime, and he, therefore, treated the arrival of Ali Haider with a certain coldness. He knew that there was discontent among the tribes in Syria and that a leader, such as Ali Haider, could well fan this discontent into open rebellion. He therefore took every care to arrange that, while respect and attention to the new Emir should not be lacking, he was not brought into close contact with any of the local Sheikhs. All this was particularly galling to the Shereef, who naturally desired the closest contact with his own people with the object, not of rebellion, but of the maintenance of order.

On the fourth day after our departure from Stamboul we reached Damascus, where a great crowd had assembled to meet me. Illumination, banquets and addresses were organized in my honour, but it soon became apparent that I was to be given little opportunity to establish a close contact with the people. Djemal Pasha enquired what funds I had brought with me, and I replied that I had been informed that all my requirements, money, food, and other supplies, would be ready waiting in Damascus. To this he made no answer beyond saying that he would communicate with me further on the subject, and then enquired when I wished to leave for Medina.

"I can leave at any moment," I said, "but first let me tell you exactly what I want." A certain Kazin Bey was put in charge of my requirements, and I must say that, as far as possible, everything was provided. I spent Bairam in Damascus as I was in need of rest. At this time Nouri ibn Shalaan, the influential chief of the powerful Rowallah, came to pay his respects to me, and I gave him a gold watch as a souvenir. But, somehow or other, I felt that the authorities were suspicious of me or, perhaps, they were jealous of the enthusiasm caused by my presence. Whatever the reason, I was prevented from having any intimate contact with the tribes who wished to rally to my standard.

One day, when I was with Djemal Pasha he enquired about the details of my journey from Stamboul. I praised the arrangements that had been made, but I spoke very candidly about the scandalous

Emir of Mecca

condition of the wretched prisoners I had encountered on the way. He seemed impressed with what I had to say, but replied that it was no direct concern of his and that he was, therefore, not in a position to do anything about it. This annoyed me.

"Whoever is directly responsible for this state of affairs," I said, "matters not. You are the Commander-in-Chief and you can, and should, have it rectified."

"In that case," he replied sharply, "put your complaint down on paper, addressed to me, and I will have it forwarded to the necessary quarters for action." But this I was unable to do. I knew full well that a complaint in writing, of this nature and signed by me, would be distorted deliberately and, in the hands of unscrupulous persons, used against me. I then spoke about the harsh treatment that was being shown towards the families of those Arab revolutionaries who had already been punished. "If one member of a family is at fault," I said, "why should the whole family be made to suffer?"

"To my mind it is right that all should suffer," he contradicted. "If the head of a family shows treasonable activity towards the Government, then it is only just that those who belong to him should share his fate."

Preparations for the departure of the Emir were hurried, so far as the Turkish military machine was capable of speed. Djemal Pasha was anxious for him to proceed to Medina as soon as possible, both to relieve himself of what he thought might become an embarrassing situation if the Syrians were to flock to the standard of Ali Haider, and also because his presence in Medina might steady the loyalty of the tribes in that district who had not become contaminated with revolutionary ideas. Djemal Pasha was, nevertheless, obsessed with the utmost suspicion of the Emir's motives, and appointed to his personal staff an equerry who would act as spy and report every action of Ali Haider. Behind the formal display of almost exaggerated ceremony which marked his departure, Ali Haider could see the suspicion lurking in the mind of Djemal Pasha. This display was obviously intended as a reminder—pathetic to those who realized the general situation—of the might of the Turkish army.

Three hundred troops and a detachment of twenty-five cavalry were added to my own personal following and, when everything was

A Prince of Arabia

ready, we left by special train for Medina. Enthusiastic scenes witnessed my departure, and troops lined the route to the railway station, where Djemal Pasha and all his staff were waiting to bid me a formal farewell. Throughout the journey to Medina I was welcomed all along the line and, whenever the train stopped, tribes would come to greet and pay me homage. Four days after my departure from Damascus we reached our destination. The journey had taken longer than usual as I was ill with fever, and the doctor had advised that the train should not proceed at too great a pace.

I shall never forget the joy I felt on the day of my arrival, when word was brought that the Holy Tomb was in sight. I immediately began to pray. As the train drew into the station the guns fired a royal salute and, when I stepped down on to the platform, I was greeted by Fakhri Pasha and an enormous gathering of people. Fakhri Pasha shook me by the hand saying: "My most respectful homage to Your Highness, the Emir." I felt, however, that there was no real warmth behind his greeting, but I could not account for it. My first action was, of course, to worship at the Holy Tomb; and I was then escorted to the house of Seyid Ahmed Effendi which had been put at my disposal.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE DEFENCE OF MEDINA

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SHEREEF ALI HAIDER in Medina on the 1st August 1916 was followed by great demonstrations from the tribes. Hussein had not endeared himself to the people; his revolt was anything but popular, and they longed for a leader who would administer justice, relieve them of oppression, and bring peace and prosperity to the country. In Ali Haider they saw the real representative of their Prophet, and they flocked to him day after day to pay homage, swear loyalty and place their services at his disposal. He was to be their saviour.

An Arab army of 15,000 enthusiastic warriors awaited the orders of the Emir, and more were eager to gather to his standard. With the manpower at his disposal—had it been properly equipped—Ali Haider could have crushed the Revolt and preserved the neutrality of his country. The war was no concern of his people—he hated it. His only object was the peace and prosperity of his country, and the glory of Islam.

But peace and justice cannot be assured to a community without an organization to provide the ordinary necessities of life. There was none. Ali Haider, the Prince of Arabia, was powerless! Medina was starved of every form of supply, there being insufficient even to feed the inadequate garrison. The Emir was, therefore, forced much against his will to temporize. He accepted the allegiance of the tribes and then dispersed them to their homes, promising that when occasion arose and supplies were forthcoming, he would utilize their services to the best of his ability. He did not wish to shed a drop of Arab blood in vain, and he loathed, above all, the idea of Arabs fighting against their own kindred, thereby starting blood feuds which might be perpetuated for centuries. If only he had the necessary organization, he knew he could restore order in the Hedjaz with the minimum of bloodshed.

The Shereef was therefore faced with no alternative but to

A Prince of Arabia

wait in Medina. At least he could assist in the organization of the defence of that city for which he was prepared to shed the last drop of blood. He could also impress upon the authorities the necessity for supplies to be sent without delay, and he could keep in touch with the outlying tribes who were ready to obey his word of command. With other potentates in the Arabian peninsular Ali Haider corresponded, and they were all ready to lend their support in the overthrow of Hussein and the re-establishment of order.

"The family of Hussein," wrote Ibn Saoud, the Wahhabi Emir of Nejd, "have produced nothing but injury and discord by their rebellion. . . . He desires independence at any cost and, for this, will indulge in every kind of intrigue among the peoples of Arabia, inciting them against each other to serve their own interests. . . . To-day, I am prepared to do anything you desire, but we require further supplies of ammunition. The position of Hussein is now weak, and we can easily defeat him if further supplies are made available. The Arab tribes are gathering—this is the best moment to attack."

With Fakhri Pasha, the Turkish military commander, the Shereef did not find it easy to co-operate, and interference with each other's responsibilities was inevitable. The Turk was suspicious, frigid in his attitude, and denied Ali Haider much essential information. He showed little confidence in the Emir, and possibly feared that his influence with the tribes might foment a second revolt against his authority. Many small incidents occurred to infuriate the Shereef, but he was too big a man to show anything but patience and fortitude. Those who had the temerity to spend their spare time at the Headquarters of the Emir became an object of suspicion to Fakhri who treated them with vindictiveness.

The inadequate supply and the poor equipment of the forces under the command of Fakhri Pasha quickly impressed the Shereef. He saw at once that the only chance of a successful operation against the rebellious Arabs was to strike without delay, advance on Mecca and dominate the coast with the capture of Yenbo, thereby preventing the forces of Hussein working round to the north. No operation of this nature, however, could be undertaken without properly organized supply

The Defence of Medina

and the longer they hesitated the greater the chance would be given to the enemy to cut off the one line of communication afforded by the Hedjaz railway. A determined advance by the Turkish forces at this moment would have defeated the Arab Revolt, and prevented even a Lawrence from reorganizing it as a force of value. But the Turks were influenced by the desire of the German Emperor to concentrate on the Suez Canal, and little attention was paid to the Hedjaz which was starved of all the necessities required for military success.

Much false sentiment has been written about the Arab Revolt. The Arabs wanted neither the dominance of Turkey nor the control of Great Britain, though the majority clung to the Caliphate. But desire to obtain the ordinary necessities of life was very naturally stronger than political principles. Under the banner of Hussein they were assured of a liberal share in the British gold which came pouring into the country in fabulous quantities, and their food supply would be guaranteed: Ali Haider could neither distribute money, nor satisfy even the most moderate requirements of the tribes, who had learnt from bitter experience of the inefficiency of the Turkish supply service.

Throughout his sojourn in Medina, Ali Haider did his best to present the Turkish authorities with as clear a picture as he could of the situation, and to urge them to take action on the lines he recommended. His first long despatch to the Grand Vizier, sent a short time after his arrival, gives a detailed description of the condition of affairs.

“The principle requirement of the tribes is food,” he wrote, “and we do not possess sufficient. In fact, we receive barely enough to supply the needs of the town people. The animals in the army are starving, and we have very little money. Paper currency is useless in the Hedjaz where gold alone is of any value. The British, on the other hand, are making lavish distributions of gold, and it is therefore essential that we should make our payments to the Bedouin in Turkish gold.

“The following words spoken to me by the Sheikh of Soubh reflect the general feeling of the tribes and are worthy of attention: ‘We promised to be loyal. Our

A Prince of Arabia

country lies along the coast and we gave our word that we would guard the shores against the enemy. The sea-board will naturally be closed to us, so, if you do not give us food, how can we exist? ' "

Recalling that a recent defeat sustained by Feisal near Medina could have been converted into complete victory with the occupation of Mecca had there been sufficient reinforcements, Ali Haider appealed for the immediate dispatch of more troops and supplies. He then complained about the inefficiency of the Hedjaz railway, stating how dependent Medina was on this line of communication, and concluded by expressing surprise that the Turks should launch an offensive on the Suez Canal before attempting to secure their flank by the restoration of order in the Hedjaz.

On the following day he sent another dispatch to the Grand Vizier pointing out that the tribes round Rabegh were all loyal and had given Ali Haider their allegiance.

At this time Taif was still holding out against the forces of Abdullah, son of Hussein, and the Shereef Ali Haider was most anxious for reinforcements to arrive before that city fell. None came, however, and on the 19th October 1916 he sent a cable to Djemal Pasha in Syria reporting the loss of Taif and urging the dispatch of more troops for the defence of Medina.

After the fall of Taif, Abdullah was free to march northward with his Bedouin, and the Shereef realized the danger involved both to Medina and to the railway. Actually, Abdullah marched straight to Khanakieh, a narrow pass controlling the route to both Nejd and Mecca, and situated about two days' journey to the South East of Medina. Thence, he crossed the railway to the north of Medina, in the course of which he met and exterminated a Turkish Mission to the Yemen, and eventually settled at a point between the coast and Hedieh, a town on the railway about 100 miles north of Medina.

The incessant efforts of the Shereef to convince the authorities both in Damascus and Stamboul of his requirements appeared to be in vain; the loyalty of the tribes who had sworn allegiance began to waver as they saw that their only reward would be starvation; and the situation increased in

The Defence of Medina

gravity. This encouraged the forces of Hussein, in whom the British now began to feel they could place more confidence; and, as the strength and influence of Ali Haider decreased with lack of support, so the Arab Revolt acquired that momentum which was eventually to carry Feisal to Damascus.

The only reinforcement that Medina received at this critical period was a regiment of the Camel Corps commanded by a very gallant officer, Atif Bey. It was an exceptionally well trained body of men, all of whom had the greatest affection and respect for their commander. This regiment was utilized to make a sortie from Bir Mashi in the direction of Rabegh, the outskirts of which they reached in a remarkably short space of time. They could have entered the town and then continued with ease towards Mecca, as the resistance they encountered was small; but the commissariat failed, they were given an insufficient supply of provisions and little money, with the result that the men and animals became decimated by disease and the remnants of them were forced to retire to Medina in a condition of starvation. Another gallant officer, who earned the respect of the Shereef Ali Haider, was a Colonel Ali Nejib Bey who was in charge of the garrison at Bir Mashi. His qualities of leadership and devotion to duty would have been a very powerful factor had the Shereef been able to advance on Mecca.

Throughout Ali Haider's sojourn in Medina a line of defence was established with two principal garrisons which controlled routes from various directions. One was at Bir Mashi which dominated the route to Rabegh, and the other at Bir Dervish on the route to Yenbo. Both these points were about twenty-five miles from Medina, and from Bir Dervish, at this period, a considerable advance had been made towards the coast as the result of a severe defeat which had been inflicted on the Emir Feisal at Nakhl Mubarak, forcing him to retire to Yenbo. The Shereef was most anxious for the occupation of Nakhl Mubarak to be maintained, since a withdrawal would expose the railway to constant attack; but the lack of provisions and reinforcements became so acute that Fakhri Pasha was eventually compelled to abandon this position.

In desperation Ali Haider sent an urgent message to Djemal

A Prince of Arabia

Pasha, pointing out that the withdrawal surrendered valuable ground to the enemy from which they could raid the railway at Hedieh and Bovata. Fakhri's army, he stated, was being decimated by disease, and the immediate dispatch of troops was vital.

Since the Emir realized that the real responsibility lay with the Government in Stamboul, he repeated his appeal to the Grand Vizier.

The difficulties with which the garrison of Medina had to contend as regards shortage of supplies were not fully realized by their opponents, and T. E. Lawrence ascribes the withdrawal from the Yenbo neighbourhood to the realization by Fakhri Pasha of the obvious hopelessness of attacking Yenbo, and to a pair of British seaplanes which did hardy flights over the desert. The dispatches of the Shereef Ali Haider present a different and more authentic reason.

While the Shereef was still struggling with the supply services to maintain a force in the region of Yenbo, he received the news that Al-Wejh had fallen to the victorious levies of Feisal, backed by the support of British warships. Again he cabled Djemal Pasha on the 29th January 1917, requesting immediate action.

Djemal replied three days later to assure the Emir that all possible efforts were being made to carry out his orders. The Grand Vizier, to whom Ali Haider had also appealed, was equally complacent and cabled on 1st February that all necessary steps had been taken to alleviate any anxiety in Medina.

A few days after this message, the Grand Vizier, Said Hallim, resigned to be replaced by Talaat Pasha who, informing Ali Haider of the change, said that after consultation with Enver, he was unable to understand the alarm expressed with regard to the situation in the Hedjaz. No action was, therefore, taken, and the attitude adopted by the authorities was difficult to understand. But the Emir eventually discovered one of the reasons which prompted this lack of interest in his predicament.

At this time a certain Houchid Bey, who had been exiled to Medina when Mahmoud Shevket was Grand Vizier, proved himself a source

The Defence of Medina

of annoyance, and was largely responsible for the starving of the beleaguered garrison. He was not lacking in respect for me, but, after several disputes with Fakhri, Houchid Bey went to Damascus where he informed Djemal that the people of Medina had ample supplies, and he accused the merchants of hiding their provisions. The result was that Djemal sent no more.

Both Fakhri and I then wrote letters in the strongest terms, stating that the story of Houchid Bey was an entire fabrication, and that Medina was being starved. To these protests Djemal merely replied that the merchants of Medina had stacks of provisions which were to be seized. So I ordered Basri Pasha to come and see me, gave him the names of the merchants specially mentioned in the reports of Houchid Bey, and told him to take a body of soldiers, police and porters to seize whatever they could lay their hands on in the way of provisions. But only sufficient food for two days was found to have been hoarded, so I wrote a further letter to Djemal Pasha reporting the situation.

The inefficiency in the supply services to Medina, and the half-hearted response of the Turkish authorities to the incessant appeals of the Shereef Ali Haider, was probably owing to the desire of the German High Command to abandon Medina altogether and concentrate every available force on the defence of Palestine. Enver Pasha and the authorities in Stamboul were undoubtedly influenced by the German contention as early as October 1916, but others realized the tremendous loss of prestige which would result in a withdrawal of this nature. The Shereef Ali Haider was, of course, horrified at the proposal, and sent his brother, Jaffer Pasha, and Abdul Mejid, his eldest son, to remonstrate with those in authority against such an outrageous idea; and it would appear that it was due principally to the protests of the Shereef that the Turks finally decided to defend Medina until the end.

Whether it was strategically sound to continue the defence of Medina under the circumstances that prevailed may be open to argument, but there is no doubt of the adverse moral effect which an abandonment of that defence would have had. In this connection it is interesting to compare the views expressed by T. E. Lawrence, which changed as the Revolt advanced. The official British view throughout the war was

that the capture of Medina was a military objective of importance, and Lawrence himself declared his belief that the fall of Medina was a necessary preliminary to any further progress of the Arab Revolt. Early in 1917, after the capture of Al-Wejh, Lawrence records the receipt of intercepted instructions from Djemal Pasha to Fakhri in Medina ordering the instant abandonment of that city, and evacuation of the troops by route march in mass. He adds: "Clayton told me that this development was to be treated with the utmost concern, and every effort made to capture Medina, or to destroy the garrison when they came out. . . . I feared that little could be done in time, for the message was days old, and the evacuation timed to begin at once."

This evacuation, of course, did not take place, and the capture of Medina remained an obsession to the British authorities, but to Lawrence it suddenly occurred that the advantages resulting from the capture of Medina were distinctly doubtful. He writes:

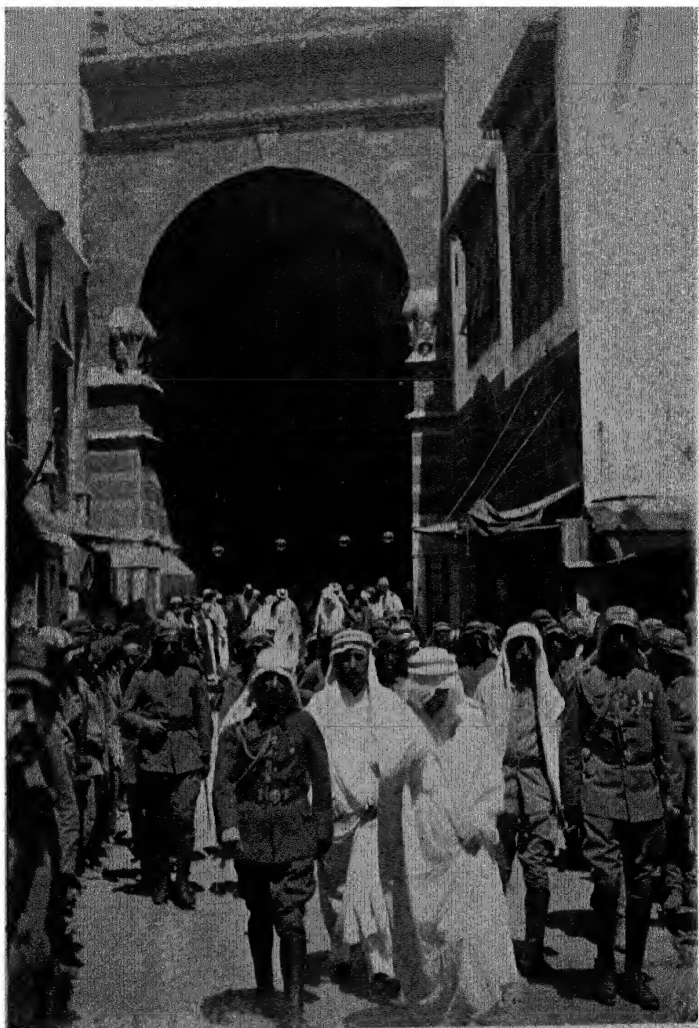
"One afternoon I woke from a hot sleep, running with sweat and pricking with flies, and wondering what on earth was the good of Medina to us. Its harmfulness had been patent when we were at Yenbo, and the Turks in it were going to Mecca; but we had changed all that on our march to Wejh. To-day we were blockading the railway, and they only defending it. The garrison of Medina, reduced to an inoffensive size, were sitting in trenches destroying their own power of movement by eating the transport they could no longer feed."

Later, he again returns to the subject by saying: "We must not take Medina. The Turk was harmless there. In prison in Egypt he would cost us food and guards. We wanted him to stay in Medina, and every other distant place, in the largest numbers. Our ideal was to keep his railway just working, but only just, with the maximum of loss and discomfort."

The British official view, however, did not alter and, at the end of 1917, Lawrence complains: "The British seemed curiously dense about Medina. They insisted that it must be captured, and lavished money and explosives on the operations which Ali and Abdullah continually undertook from their



Fakhri Pasha. Commander and Governor of Medina, 1916-1919



Medina, 1916. The Emir Shereef Ali Haider
leaving the Mosque after
a Friday service

The Defence of Medina

Yenbo base. When I pleaded to the contrary, they treated my views as a witty paradox."

Medina is a city surrounded by hills of great strategic value which were strongly fortified. A direct attack was, therefore, unlikely and the chief danger lay in the complete severing of the single narrow track of the Hedjaz railway connecting Medina with Damascus. Pressure on this—the only line of communication—increased, and the question of evacuation became a major consideration. The struggle to be allowed to maintain the defence of Medina is vividly described by the Shereef Ali Haider.

Pressure on Medina now began to be so great that the question of evacuation was seriously considered. Against this step I protested most strongly. Some important Turkish officials holding positions of responsibility arrived, one day, from Damascus, and said to me: "Djemal Pasha is very anxious for this evacuation to take place, and he is only waiting for your approval."

"I am convinced," I said, "that a total evacuation and surrender of the city would be bad policy. It would create a most unfavourable impression." They seemed to agree, but returned to Damascus within a few hours of this conversation.

I very much feared that evacuation would be forced upon us, and I was determined to delay it as long as possible. The difficulties of the situation in Medina grew almost hourly. Fakhri Pasha told me of the want in every direction; of the lack of troops, ammunition and provisions. Rumours reached Medina that a change in command was contemplated, and that Moustapha Kemel would relieve Fakhri Pasha. Moustapha Kemel, however, refused to accept the post, so no alteration took place; but Fakhri thought it was I who had originated the idea that he should thus be superseded. This, of course, was ridiculous.

So the days passed. An occasional train with a meagre quantity of supplies would arrive from Damascus and bring slight relief to the famished garrison; the military situation stagnated, and a general feeling of uncertainty pervaded all. Then, one day, Fakhri Pasha burst into my quarters in a state of great distress to say that he had received orders for the immediate evacuation of the city. The news horrified me. Hastily I sent a strongly-worded telegram to Djemal in which I said that the very idea of deserting the Holy Tomb was utterly shameful, and that it should be protected to the last man, if

A Prince of Arabia

necessary. A vague hope that Djemal might relent, kept us waiting impatiently.

About three evenings later, Fakhri again burst into my quarters, but this time he was happy and excited. "Djemal has cancelled the orders for evacuation," he exclaimed, "and we are to do everything possible towards maintaining the defence of Medina." He was in a state of considerable emotion and I, in my joy, clasped and embraced him. From that moment we became friends, where before we had misunderstood each other. I saw so much deep religious faith in him that I found it quite easy to forgive the past. I think also from that day his confidence in me became more real, for his whole attitude towards me underwent a considerable change.

The certainty that the defence of the Holy Tomb would continue and that there would now be no surrender to the enemy filled us with the greatest satisfaction. My personal delight, however, was to be short-lived for, a few days later, I received a telegram from Enver Pasha suggesting that I and my staff should leave Medina. This came as a great blow to me, but the arguments in favour of my removal to Syria left me with no other alternative. Although the Turkish high command had decided against the general evacuation of Medina on political grounds, Enver Pasha had given up any idea of regaining further hold on the Hedjaz and had contemplated, even, closing the line to Medina, leaving the Holy City to its fate. The strategic position of Medina, and the possible knowledge that no serious attack on it was contemplated, led the Turkish authorities to believe that the defence of the city could be maintained for a long time. From the Turkish point of view the primary consideration at the moment was to make as firm a stand as possible in Palestine. If I was to stay in Medina I would to all intents and purposes be entirely cut off from the world outside, forgotten by victors and vanquished alike, and unable to exert any influence on Arabian affairs. In Syria, on the other hand, I could keep in touch with what was happening and be in a better position to conduct the affairs of the tribes who normally came under my control.

So I gave my camels and my horses, my provisions and my stores to Fakhri Pasha for his own use, together with the detachment of cavalry that had been detailed as my escort. The remainder of my troops, however, returned with me to Damascus, as Djemal required them to stiffen his resistance on the Palestine front. It was with the greatest sorrow and regret that I left the Holy Tomb for the last time and proceeded to the station. We said farewell.

"The protection of this Tomb is in the hands of God, but you are

The Defence of Medina

His instrument. I leave it in your care. Be worthy of the trust." Those were my last words to Fakhri, and he did not fail in the confidence reposed in him. He never surrendered, and when the War was over, he still remained in Medina until he received orders from his Government to return. The train moved off . . . !

Had Djemal Pasha been allowed to have his own way it is more than probable that Ali Haider would have been retained in Medina. The distrust which the Pasha had shown towards him in August 1916 had in no way diminished eighteen months later, and it was with evident concern that he viewed the return of the Emir to Syria. On the other hand, both Enver and Talaat knew to what extent the word of Ali Haider could be trusted, and they were convinced that his presence in Syria would have a reassuring effect upon the tribes.

On arrival at Damascus Djemal was on the station platform hiding behind his courtesy the deepest suspicion of the Emir's intentions. For a few months Ali Haider remained in Damascus, then, as the weather became warmer, he moved to the Lebanon where he was able to secure a suitable house for himself and his entourage at Aley. Djemal, however, appeared to have so much consideration for his comfort that he tried to prevail on him to occupy the isolated palace of Bedreddin which few visitors could reach on account of its inaccessibility. The Shereef protested, telling Djemal to mind his own business; and an appeal was made to Enver Pasha who upheld Ali Haider. Nevertheless, every obstacle was placed in the way of visitors having contact with the Shereef who was hedged round with numerous spies. To a certain extent the precautions of Djemal were understandable, because Syria was seething with discontent, and there was a number of powerful Arabs who would have been only too ready to rally to the side of Ali Haider had he desired to stab Djemal in the back.

To such suggestions the Emir consistently turned a deaf ear. He had sworn to be loyal to the Sultan, and loyal he would remain. In spite of the precautions taken by Djemal he could, through his position and personal influence, have led a rebellion in Syria which would probably have established him in a strong position in that country where he might have been

A Prince of Arabia

officially recognized by the victorious Allies at the termination of the War. Ali Haider hated rebellion as an underhand method of gratifying personal ambition. So the time passed, and the Arab Sheikhs either melted away into their deserts, or joined the forces of the Emir Feisal in order to share the illimitable supplies of British gold. Among the latter was Nouri-ibn-Shalaan, the powerful chief of the Rowallah tribesmen.

Sometimes visitors from Beirut would come up to the mountains to see me, and to some of them I would remark on the *Wali's* concern about my desire to live near the coast during the winter months. "His concern is to keep you away from us," they declared.

I was told that Djemal had offered £20,000 (and the Emirate of Jauf) to the son of Nouri-ibn-Shalaan for the body of Feisal, dead or alive, and had given him a good portion of this sum in advance. I was annoyed that Djemal had never mentioned this to me, but I suppose he knew that I would protest strongly against this action. The son in question, however, betrayed Djemal, told Feisal and thus gained a double reward. Ibn-Shalaan rallied to the side of Feisal, and thus broke away from the jurisdiction of Turkey. I do not blame him. The Turkish leaders in Syria would persist in going their own way, they paid little heed to the interests of the Sheikhs or the tribes, and they remained stubborn to the end. Thus they alienated the people, lost their respect and caused them to lose faith in the word of a Turk.

Soon after Ali Haider had established himself in Aley in the summer of 1917 arrangements were made for the Shereef's family, which included Princess Fatma and her two daughters, to join him from Constantinople. After a long and tedious journey lasting for more than eight days, their train finally steamed into Aley station, where the older sons and members of the Shereef's bodyguard were there to welcome them. The ladies of the household were conducted to the Emir's car, a closed Fiat, by obsequious equerries, and they were then driven up steep roads with curling hairpin bends to the top of a mountain. Then through iron gates, up a drive through a garden to a low square stone house, on the steps of which stood the Emir, dressed in spotless white, his hands outstretched in welcome.

The Defence of Medina

During the winter of 1917-18 the series of crushing disasters which were to determine the end of the war in the Near East began to befall the Turco-German armies in Palestine and Syria. In June 1917 General Allenby had begun preparations for his great offensive which was to sweep the Turks out of the country. Beersheba was captured on the 31st October, Gaza on the 7th November, and on the 9th December General Allenby entered Jerusalem, with becoming reverence, on foot at the head of his victorious troops. The occupation of Acre and Haifa in September 1918, together with the crossing of the Jordan into the land of Moab, paved the way for the masterly operations which, in the early autumn, resulted in the capture and destruction of practically the whole Turkish army in Syria.

As the British advanced, so grew the resentment of the Turks towards the Germans. Those who had looked upon the alliance with Germany in the first instance with disfavour, now openly denounced the folly of the Young Turks who had countenanced it. "Our leaders have deceived us," became the cry of the people. Turkish officers defied their German superiors, and desertion was rampant. From the troop trains which brought reinforcements to the hard pressed front it was a common sight to watch men jump from the crawling wag-gons and make their escape under the very eyes of the sentries who paid no attention.

Again and again bitter quarrels would break out between the Germans and the Turks, revolvers or bayonets might be drawn and unnecessary blood spilt on both sides. The Shereef's wife records an occasion when a dispute arose between his equerry, Nourreddin Bey, and some German officers in control of transport. The Germans desired the Shereef's car for their own use, and Nouredin had the orders of Enver that it should be retained in the service of the Shereef. They flew at one another, and the troops attached to the Shereef assumed such a threatening attitude that the Germans had to surrender their claim.

Meanwhile, in Constantinople, dissensions within the Committee of Union and Progress, and within the Cabinet itself, grew more and more acrimonious. Enver's ascendancy waned

A Prince of Arabia

as his prophecies of victory were successively falsified, and the latent antagonism between Talaat, the Grand Vizier, and the masterful Minister of War became more and more acute. Mahommed VI, better known as the Sultan Vahid-ed-Din, had succeeded to the Throne on the death of his brother on the 3rd July 1918, and he declined to be a mere cypher to the autocracy of Enver. Opposition was becoming articulate throughout the country and had influential backers in the Palace. When, at the end of September, Bulgaria threw up the sponge and exposed European Turkey to invasion by the Allied armies moving up from Salonika, the whole edifice of Turkish misrule began to quake and totter to its fall. Allenby's crushing victories in Syria dealt the final blow.



1918

Return to Stamboul

The Armistice brings Disillusion

Ali Haider struggles to retain his Rights

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ARMISTICE

AS CONDITIONS IN SYRIA became more precarious, the activities of the Shereef were hedged about with further restrictions. The helplessness of his position grew more apparent, and he was at a loss to know how to help his country in the way that he desired. The Emir refused to lift a finger to aid the defence of the Turks from the irresistible advance of Allenby, and he was accused of pro-British sympathies. In his own family, counsels were divided. The Princess Fatma, his English wife, did much, with the approval of the Shereef, to alleviate the sufferings of British subjects, while other elements in his family opposed any tendency that could be regarded as anti-Turk. The Shereef Ali Haider was a victim to his principles.

In August 1918 Sultan Rechad died, to be succeeded by his cousin, Sultan Vahid-ed-Din, who was destined to be the last Sultan of the House of Osman.

Vahid-ed-Din was superstitious and desired that the representative of the Prophet should witness the ceremony of the Girding of the Sword (the equivalent of Coronation). He never forgot how Ali Haider had deftly fastened the buckle for the late Sultan when the officials, overcome with nervousness, had fumbled and nearly dropped the sword while trying to negotiate the considerable girth of Sultan Rechad at his ceremony. Vahid-ed-Din needed all the good luck possible and therefore invited the Grand Shereef to be his guest in the Mejedieh Palace in Constantinople. Perhaps he thought, also, that with the final *débâcle* in sight, it was wiser to have Ali Haider out of Syria where he might be a source of embarrassment to the Government. But the Shereef imagined that his visit to the capital would be of only short duration and that, a few weeks later he would return.

Preparations were therefore made for him to leave early in September, accompanied by his brother, his second son,

A Prince of Arabia

Mohiddin, and a small staff. Then came the day of departure. A huge crowd lined the route to the railway station as the Emir's car moved slowly down the road to the accompaniment of a great ovation—cheers, clapping, tears and lamentations. In spite of the restrictions with which Ali Haider had been surrounded, he had won the hearts of the common people by his kindness and charity, with the result that they now felt genuine sorrow at his departure.

The long railway journey was uneventful, and the Shereef describes the general indifference shown by the people along the route and the prevailing feeling of imminent catastrophe. But, in spite of the atmosphere of gloom, he could still enjoy the magnificent scenery of the mountains, and record:

Beauty is to be found in every corner of this range showing the insignificance of man compared with the glory of God. Inshallah, we will continue to learn from the teachings of Nature.

He was horrified at the shocking state of the houses, at the poverty, ill-health, and degradation of the peasants, and expressed a longing to be able to construct hospitals and arrange for a system of education.

A large and distinguished gathering awaited his arrival at Haider Pasha (the railway terminus on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus)—representatives of the Sultan and Crown Prince, the Seyid Senoussi, Enver, Djemal and Izzet Pashas and many others. A special message from the Sultan conveyed the Imperial greetings, and suggested that the Emir should rest for a day to recover from the fatigue of the journey before paying a personal visit.

"My principal desire," I said, "is to see His Majesty as soon as possible." I then craved the indulgence of those who had been good enough to receive me in order to give expression to my wish. A special launch conveyed me across the Bosphorus to the steps of Dolma Bagtche.

When His Majesty was ready to receive me, I entered his presence with my brother and my two sons, Abdul Mejid and Mohiddin. Much ceremony was observed and, when the usual courtesies had been exchanged, the Sultan said: "I am much gratified, and I thank you most sincerely for the thought which prompted you to

Armistice

come and see me with the dust of the long journey still upon your feet, in spite of the desire I expressed that you should first enjoy a little rest."

"To do my duty towards Your Majesty gives me the greatest pleasure," I replied. This was, of course, the first occasion on which I had been able to pay my respects to the new Sultan.

"I fear that your stay in Damascus and the Lebanon placed you in an invidious position," he continued, "and I pray God that He will give you Mecca and Medina so that the omissions of the past may be rectified."

I thanked him for his sentiments and, after further conversation, requested permission to retire.

As a guest of the Sultan, Ali Haider was given quarters in the Palace of Serai Bournai in Stamboul, on Seraglio Point, where he received many visitors including the Crown Prince, the President of the Senate and the late Grand Vizier. Talaat Pasha was in Berlin. The Emir also records a visit to Enver Pasha who appeared complacent with regard to the general situation.

I asked about the chances of peace, but Enver was non-committal in his reply. As I rose to go, I said: "The men employed in the railways are deplorable, some sleep, some are hopelessly drunk—all are concerned only with their own business. I implore you either to send honest men to inspect them or go unannounced to see the state of affairs yourself." He assured me that he would do so, and I returned to the Serai Bournai.

I was not at all pleased with my return to Constantinople and three things alone consoled me: 1. The Sultan appeared to be sympathetic and understanding in his attitude towards me, but I was later to find this supposition to be mistaken.

2. I renewed my acquaintance with many old friends.

3. I had been able to tell those in authority what I had seen and exactly what I thought. Whether any notice would be taken or not, I had the satisfaction of having given expression to my feelings.

In this state of mind, I waited for the return of the Grand Vizier, Talaat Pasha, from Berlin, intending to ask permission to return to Syria without delay. Since I had been in Stamboul I had heard nothing but complaints, and I was heartily sick of all the unrestricted criticism each had for one another.

But Talaat remained in Germany for longer than was

A Prince of Arabia

expected, in spite of an urgent cable from Ali Haider calling his attention to matters connected with Syria which he alone could rectify.

The Constantinople to which the Shereef Ali Haider returned in the early autumn of 1918 was very different to the gay and enthusiastic city he had left two years before. At that time the Turks had been flushed with the defeat which they considered had been inflicted on the British at Gallipoli; the Young Turk leaders had proclaimed with conviction the solidarity of their German friendship which found response in the hearts of the masses. The whole nation had been keyed up to the expectation of an early victory, which would gain for Turkey a position of equality with the greatest Powers in the world. Now, everything was different, enthusiasm having given way to despair as ominous signs of impending disaster became clear to even the meanest intelligence.

In spite of Enver's assurances to the Shereef about the Palestine campaign, the victorious forces of General Allenby had swept northward and by the end of September were hammering at the gates of Damascus, which was later entered by the Emir Feisal. The Turkish army was utterly routed and had virtually ceased to exist; the country had lost enormous quantities of war material and was running short of ammunition and supplies. The Arab provinces of the Empire were gone. The population was starving. By the time the Grand Vizier returned from Berlin the futility of going back to Syria was apparent even to the Shereef, who now took the necessary steps to ensure the safety of his family whom he had left in Aley, and made arrangements for their return to Stamboul.

He was not a moment too early. On the very night they started their journey the earth quivered from the explosions caused by the Turks and Germans blowing up ammunition dumps before the relentless progress of their enemy. The sky went white, and splashes of red tore great gaps in the darkness as shells went off in the air. Next day—30th September—mob hysteria broke loose in Damascus as the victorious forces of Allenby entered the city. That evening the family of the Shereef reached Rayak, where they met the panic-stricken population swept up in the wild retreat of the Turco-German

armies. The railway station was in utter darkness. Scarcely a light glimmered from the frightened town which expected a repetition of the air raid it had experienced the night before, the platforms swarmed with wild-eyed refugees fleeing from a terror quite beyond control. Discipline was completely lacking: crowds fought and scrambled, screamed and pushed, in order to occupy any corner in a train which might carry them to safety. It was impossible for the small local special carrying the family of Ali Haider to proceed farther. They were forced to change.

A loyal bodyguard, who placed service to the senior descendant of their Prophet before every other consideration, cleared the way and commandeered the best accommodation—a carriage with broken windows and wooden seats which reeked with the stench of unwashed bodies. At least, it brought a semblance of privacy to the harassed ladies, and darkness, fortunately, obscured the filth with which the carriage was littered. As the mob swarmed over the roofs of the coaches, clung to the running boards and even tried to occupy positions underneath the train, sentries of the bodyguard defended, with fixed bayonets, the privacy of the Shereef's ladies. A Turkish officer, who had lost control both of himself and his men, tried to push aside the guard and exert an authority he no longer possessed. With a piercing scream he fell on to the track as a sentry lunged at him with his bayonet. At length the train moved off. As it jolted over the uneven track many who clung precariously were forced to lose their hold. The wounded were the first to fall—as they fell there they lay to wait their *kismet*—and the carrion.

As the journey progressed, conditions gradually improved, but the family of the Shereef were to have a nasty experience on reaching Homs. Here, a party of German soldiers ordered the coaches containing the Princess Fatma and her entourage to be detached in order that they might be utilized to accommodate German stragglers and stores. It was quite obvious that there could be no addition to the already overcrowded train. Nevertheless, German soldiers, with fixed bayonets, advanced towards the coaches with the intention of commanding them and turning out the passengers.

A Prince of Arabia

"You shall not have these coaches," declared Nourreddin Bey, the principal equerry of the Shereef. "We are still masters of our own country, and will not be ordered about by any of you — Germans!"

"We have orders from a higher authority," shouted the German officer in charge. Then to his troops: "Do as I order, and take those wagons." The Princess and her daughters stayed very still behind the swarthy figures of their bodyguard. "Stay where you are," demanded Nourreddin, as he ordered his own men to stand by at the ready. "Advance another foot and we fire."

The troops round the Princess were numerically stronger than the Germans, and they adopted such a menacing attitude that the latter hesitated to obey the commands of their officer. "Drive on," shouted Nourreddin to the engine driver, and the wheezy train proceeded on its journey much to the discomfiture of the Germans.

After this experience, the journey became more peaceful, and the family of the Shereef suffered no further molestation.

Meanwhile in Stamboul the reaction against the leading members of the Committee of Union and Progress, who were now held responsible for the misfortunes that had overtaken Turkey, increased considerably. The people were undoubtedly shaken by the lofty moral propaganda, spread by the Allies, on respect for nationality and enthusiasm for humanity. It is freely admitted that this propaganda immensely contributed to the military success in all theatres of war in 1918. The country ached for peace, confident that the peace terms would be just. In the general state of uncertainty political intrigue was rampant, and the voice of dissatisfaction became so dominant that both Enver and Talaat were forced to bow to the popular clamour and relinquish the high offices which they held.

The reaction against the Committee of Union and Progress extended further than an outcry towards those who had led Turkey into a war which had proved disastrous. Great Britain had been regarded as the chief adversary during the first World War, and there now grew a wild desire to make friends with her friends in order to soften any blows which the

Armistice

peace terms might impose. "We have made a great mistake," the people cried. "We have chosen the wrong side: we were forced into the war by Enver and Talaat who have now been superseded. No one ought to blame us for being so misled. Of course we must be punished, but let us be chastised by our old friend, England."

With the prevalence of these sentiments began the betrayal of those who had been most faithful to the country. Among the recognized friends of Great Britain were Hussein and his sons who had led the Arab Revolt against the authority of the Caliph, and had committed what was regarded by many as a crime against Islam. Skilful propaganda, therefore, began to disseminate the idea that it would be wise to make friends with Hussein, and withdraw support from the Emir who had been steadfast in his principles and loyalty from the outbreak of war—the Shereef Ali Haider. To the great discredit of a chivalrous people like the Turks, this propaganda was allowed to proceed to limits that must always cause them shame. Ali Haider, therefore, saw that the future held for him little promise, and a bitterness which is understandable grew in his heart for Hussein. Before the popular outcry became too loud, he was determined to make every effort to ensure the recognition of his rights. He refused to believe that he would ever be sacrificed to political expediency. To whom could he best turn, but to the friend of his boyhood—the Crown Prince Abdul Mejid? While his family were still on their way to Stamboul, he addressed himself to the sympathetic Prince.

I went to visit the Crown Prince, Abdul Mejid. "I have come without any ceremony to visit you," I said. "Up to this moment I have told you nothing which would depress you, but now I fear I must do so."

He showed great interest, drew his chair up close to mine and listened with grave attention to what I had to say. I reminded him that before the outbreak of the Great War both Talaat and Enver had wished to send troops to the Hedjaz in order to effect the deposition of Hussein. But the Grand Vizier opposed the intentions of Enver, so the whole matter was shelved until Hussein raised the standard of revolt in 1916.

"You know," I said, "what happened then? They offered my

A Prince of Arabia

family the rights that properly belonged to us and, as its representative, I accepted without laying down any conditions. I was, however, promised that anything I subsequently desired would be granted, and that any stipulations I might make would be respected. I arrived in Medina, and after I had been there for fifteen days and had acquired a thorough grasp of the situation, I sent telegrams to Enver and Djemal urging the necessity for supplies."

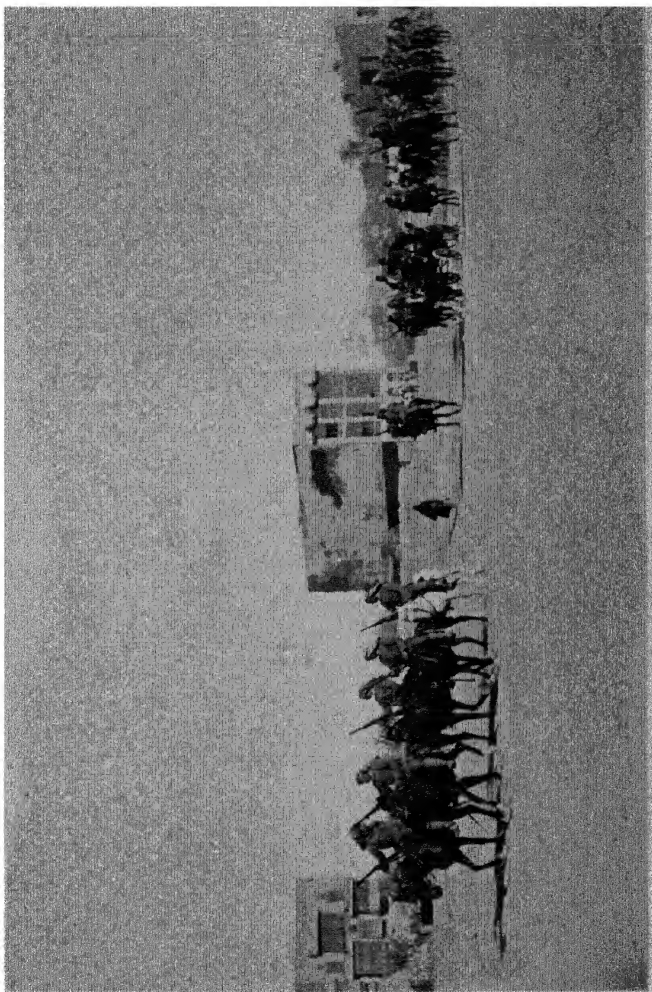
I showed the Crown Prince copies of the dispatches and cables and he was astonished at the replies I had received. I told him of what little help I had really received from the High Command and how my suggestions had been constantly ignored.

"During my stay in Medina and Syria," I said, "I felt the ill-disguised suspicion of the authorities who never seemed willing to trust me. Now that the Government is obliged to sue for peace it is impossible to foresee what might happen. So I beg Your Royal Highness to work your hardest to see that my rights in the Hedjaz are recognized by the world. Without any further resource to arms I implore you to do everything possible to safeguard my rights and your Caliphate."

Abdul Mejid agreed with everything I said. "As far as I can see," he stated, "it is my duty to Islam, the Caliphate and myself to work my hardest for your interests. I can assure you I will do my best."

With the internal situation in Turkey going from bad to worse, Ali Haider grew restless, and began to doubt the integrity of the Sultan. He was anxious, too, about his family and was, therefore, much relieved when he was able to welcome them back during the first week in October after their tiring and dangerous journey. The city was in a deplorable condition and a *konak*, which the Shereef had tried to prepare for his family, was far from habitable. Even water was rationed and a decent wash was almost impossible.

A Cabinet had just been formed under Izzet Pasha, containing more moderate members of the Committee of Union and Progress, and Princess Fatma records the anxiety of the people for the new Grand Vizier to conclude an armistice with the British as soon as possible. From the beginning it looked as though Turkey was going to take little interest in her former Arabian dependencies, so the Shereef was urged to gather together the Arab members in Parliament, and arrange for one of his family to lead them as a separate deputation to



Outside Medina, 1916

The Emir Shereef Ali Haider goes for a drive



The Return of the Emir, Shereef Ali Haider, to Stamboul, 1918

In front:
Prince Omar Farouk [son of the last Caliph, Abdul Mejid], Enver Pasha [Acting Grand Vizier and Minister of War],
The Shereef Ali Haider [Emir of Mecca], Sheikh Ahmed Al-Senussi, Ahmed Jemel Pasha [Minister of Marine]

Armistice

the Allies in Switzerland. These efforts were fruitless, as it was said that Izzet Pasha himself would champion the rights of Ali Haider, and there was therefore no need to fear.

In spite of the tendency of the Turks to cut their losses over Arabia, the Shereef still had many friends who held him in great admiration. In fact, his diary at this time records the visits of all sorts and conditions of men, from the highest to the lowest; men who had held big positions of responsibility, who had now fallen from their pedestal; and men who were now assuming high office for perhaps the first time in their careers. All came to seek his advice and to gain encouragement from his quiet faith. The new Ministers, the Wali of Beirut, the Mutessarif of Jerusalem and many others sought his sympathy, disclosing their anxieties and pouring out their troubles to him. Had the Shereef kept a record of all these conversations, it would have been one of intense interest, for his mind was a reservoir of secret history. He could estimate the value of a man's word with an insight which was almost uncanny, and his quiet sense of humour would penetrate and expose the liar and the charlatan. Nevertheless he had a great faith in the essential goodness of human nature.

A succession of minor air raids over the city increased the outcry for an armistice and, on the 18th October, the Shereef records the arrangements made for General Townsend, who had been captured at Kut, to be driven to British Headquarters to assist in making the first overtures.

All this time Ali Haider himself had been living in the Serai Bournai as the guest of the Sultan, but now that his family had been settled in the *konak* at Nishantash, on the European side of the Bosphorus, he decided to join them.

I called at Dolma Bagtche to ask permission of the Sultan to leave the Serai Bournai, and to thank him for the hospitality he had shown. He was in the Palace garden by the aviary, and he asked me to sit with him. For an hour we sat together watching and talking about the birds and then, eventually, got down to business. We spoke of my grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, and of the friendship the Sultan's uncle, Abdul Aziz, had always entertained for him. "I venture to hope," he said, "that the same friendship will continue to exist between us."

As the days passed, the prospects of peace grew nearer and, on the

A Prince of Arabia

29th October, Raouf Bey and Hickmet Bey boarded the flagship of the British Admiral at Mudros to sue for peace. On the following day, an armistice was signed, and I heard in the Senate that the Turks had been offered easier conditions than those which had been given to the Bulgarians. After all the faults we had committed we appeared to be receiving light treatment, and I prayed God that those in authority would not lose their heads. Enver, however, wished to reply to the English terms by unsheathing the sword once again; public opinion was too strong for him and, a few days later, he, Talaat, Djemal and most of the influential members of the Committee of Union and Progress had fled the country. The Press hinted that some of the leading members of the Party were to be brought to trial. How strange, I felt, these people were, who never tired of rending each other to pieces! Such wild accusations were levelled against any one who was unpopular!

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE STRUGGLE IN STAMBOUL

THE TERMS OF THE ARMISTICE certainly appeared easier than even the most optimistic Turks had been led to expect. They were drawn up by men of understanding who looked forward to a rapid renewal of the age-old friendship between Turkey and Great Britain. The Turks themselves were disposing of those whom they accused of leading the country into the first World War—though at one time they had given them whole-hearted support—and the Allies, therefore, agreed to abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of Turkey, or with the composition of the Turkish Cabinet. They were so sanguine about their future relations with Turkey that nothing was said about the surrender of Turkish arms and ammunition, or other war material. Although the Allies fully realized that there was sufficient of these war stores in the hands of the Turks to do a great deal of mischief, they were confident that this gesture of good faith would be fully repaid. Those who drew up the terms of the Armistice, however, did not reckon with the minds of the mischievous and short-sighted politicians who were to wreck the basis on which a just and lasting peace could have been secured.

In the Turkish Press, Enver, Talaat and other leading members of the Committee of Union and Progress were denounced without restraint, and Enver was said to have fled to the Caucasus where he boasted of being able to rally 80,000 men to restore the Constitution. What he required to restore, beyond his own dominant position, was not quite clear. "Enver's wife is indignant," writes the Princess Fatma, "that they call her husband a thief, but his grasp of military power spelt the ruin of Turkey and enormous sums were spent to keep the army to his policy. Talaat would have broken away, but the army was too much in the hands of Enver."

On Friday, 1st November, Allied flags were seen to fly from some of the buildings in Stamboul, and a great feeling of relief

A Prince of Arabia

swept over the city. The sight of a British flag going up so affected the Princess Fatma that she clapped her hands in gratitude. An old gentleman standing near approached and, with tears in his eyes, lifted her hand, saying, "Madame, permettez-moi d'embrasser votre main ! "

The Germans were given a month to get clear of the country and they at once began to dismantle the telephone wires and everything which they alleged belonged to them. They even took the gold from the banks and plundered to an extent that showed they had lost much of their discipline. Their own country was so preoccupied that arrangements for their repatriation were inefficient, and many were left to find their own way home as best they could. Six weeks later, some could still be seen dodging among the crowds near the bridges trying to sell small Christmas toys to enable them to get sufficient money to cover the expense of transport to Germany. Violent demonstrations against the Germans were feared, but did not materialize to any great extent. They were, nevertheless, regarded with intense hatred.

As soon as the Armistice had been officially confirmed, the Shereef Ali Haider went to see the Grand Vizier, Izzet Pasha, to find out to what extent the new Cabinet was going to uphold his rights with the Allied Powers. If the Turkish Government had decided to disregard his existence, he intended to strike out for himself: if they were prepared to support him, he was willing to leave his future in their hands and do nothing which would embarrass them.

"Effendim," I said to the Grand Vizier, "I rejoice in your appointment for two reasons, first for the sake of the country and secondly for the sake of my family. In fact, I know that you would do anything for me; but what can you do at the present moment?"

"I will do my best," he replied, "and I can assure you that my most earnest wish is to do everything I can for your interests. Great changes, however, are taking place in Arabia and we are powerless to interfere, since the control has slipped from our hands. Separate and independent countries will probably be formed and nominally united under the King of the Arabs. I have every hope, however, that we will be allowed to retain the Caliphate."

"If the British insist that Hussein should remain King of the

The Struggle in Stamboul

Hedjaz," I asked, "what attitude will the Turkish Government adopt? Will you agree?"

"I will keep you supplied with any confidential information I may obtain on this question." Izzet Pasha's reply was evasive.

"Suppose I made a move myself?" I suggested.

"If you started any propaganda in Syria or elsewhere in your favour at the present time," he said, "it would become a source of embarrassment to the Turkish Government. Please do nothing of the sort."

"Please remember," I said, "that ever since the time of my ancestor, Shereef Ghalib, the family of Mohammed Ali intrigued with and supported that of Hussein. On three different occasions the Turkish Government deposed my grandfather, Abdul Muttalib, and the reason given for the last deposition was that he was too friendly with the British. In consequence, Sultan Abdul Hamid kept my family under the closest supervision in Stamboul. When the revolution was proclaimed in 1908 it was announced that the rights of individuals would be respected. We were pleased and anticipated recognition, but from not a single one of you have we received anything of permanent value. When we speak the truth our words have no effect. In spite of the treatment under which I have suffered I have never hesitated to warn you about certain things that were taking place, and of influences which were insinuating themselves into the politics of Arabia.

"At length the Turkish Government began to grasp the reality of the situation, and Talaat Pasha, as Minister of the Interior, insisted that attention should be paid to the question of the Emirate of Mecca. Then the Grand Vizier, Said Hallim, supported by Mahmoud Pasha and Ibrahim Bey, exerted his influence to have the matter shelved. In the end Hussein became a rebel and the Emirate was given to me. Your government promised that everything possible would be done and stated that all necessities and supplies would be ready waiting at Damascus. I went to Damascus and Medina where I made known to you my requirements by means of ciphered telegrams. Generally no notice was taken: when occasionally it was followed up it was always too late. I returned to Damascus. Had I done in Syria what I could have done, I would have become its King. I could have acted towards you in just the same manner as Hussein acted in the Hedjaz, but my sense of what is right, prevented me from doing so. During the winter of 1917-18, Djemal Pasha and Asmi Bey prevented me from living in Beirut, and gave as a reason the fear that I should be captured by the British if they carried out a landing and

A Prince of Arabia

stormed the town. The insincerity of their argument was obvious; I realized the suspicions they harboured against me but I remained patient.

"Winter passed in the Lebanon and your hold over the country grew weaker. If you read the reports that I sent, you will understand the position in the way it should have been understood. At the invitation of the Sultan I returned to Stamboul, and matters in Syria went from bad to worse. When I told Enver Pasha that I was anxious for the safety of my family in the Lebanon and asked him to make arrangements for their removal, he merely replied that there was no cause for me to worry. To me this reply was strange. If I had not insisted, and worked, myself, to ensure the security of my family, they would now be prisoners in the hands of Feisal. May your efforts restore to me my rights!"

I never knew to what extent the Grand Vizier appreciated this résumé of my case. He gave me the impression that he had little hope of being able to achieve anything himself, but said that the British were showing him every courtesy and consideration. I could merely hope for the best.

On the 9th November, however, Izzet Pasha was forced to resign the position of Grand Vizier, due to certain elements in the Cabinet which were not conducive to a successful carrying out of the terms of the Armistice. He was succeeded by Tewfik Pasha, who formed his Cabinet on the following day, and was to remain in office for five months. Two days later I went to Bab Ali to offer my congratulations. The Grand Vizier was most agreeable, and I told him that I had not only come to congratulate him, but also to say how I expected him to protect my rights and further the interests of my family.

"It is my duty to do so," he replied; "just in the same way as it is the duty of the Sultan to protect the Caliphate. We need more than ever the assistance of influential Arabs."

It should have been obvious at this time that the Turkish Cabinet was not going to make any great effort on behalf of the Shereef, although Tewfik Pasha had declared his adherence to the Caliphate and consequent desire to protect the rights of the Emir. On the subject of these statements, the Princess Fatma writes in her diary: "What liars! They will sacrifice Haider any day for Hussein and his money!" Nevertheless, the Shereef's confidence in the good faith of his

The Struggle in Stamboul

fellow men prevented him from taking any action which could be interpreted as back door intrigue.

On the 13th November, ships of the British Fleet steamed into the Bosphorus, and moored between the mouth of the Golden Horn and the Palace of Dolma Bagtche. The ships had been expected some days before, but the Germans had destroyed their plans of the minefields which had to be cleared beforehand. French warships followed and, later, American, Italian and Greek ships also arrived. The Allied occupation had begun. With what mingled feelings the Turks must have watched the quiet entry of the victorious fleet—the outward and visible sign of Turkey's abject submission! Pending the arrival of an accredited representative, the British Admiral was temporarily appointed High Commissioner.

From the balcony of my house I watched the arrival of the British Fleet. The ships looked so proud as they entered with perfect precision; but my mind was full of emotion and I prayed God for a lasting peace.

A few days later I went to see Prince Abdul Mejid and found him most upset over the general state of affairs. He mentioned the departure of Talaat from the country, and complained that Izzet Pasha had kept him insufficiently informed about what was happening. He appeared, however, to have confidence in Tewfik Pasha but knew very little about the other members of the Cabinet. He then spoke about my own position.

"Your problem is now rather complicated," he said.

"Yes," I replied, "I await help from God, as I see no hope from man."

"Why not put your case before the Grand Vizier?" he suggested.

"I have," I said, "but when I ask him to protect my rights I do not know what meaning he attaches to my words or how much he understands. In any case Medina still holds out against Hussein, and before it falls there is much that can be said. If the Ottoman Government is forced to accept many conditions laid down by Great Britain, then it is only fair for the government to insist on a consideration of other aspects and to point out that Shereef Hussein is a rebel to the Caliphate. As he can bring nothing but harm to this institution, which is of such vital importance to the Moslem world, he should therefore be prevented from holding the position he, at present, occupies. Can you not see the importance of this question, which tran-

A Prince of Arabia

scends that of any other political consideration at the moment, since it embraces the whole of Islam? You must exert your whole influence to insist upon my recognition. In the past, the Turkish Government have often promised to form virtually independent Arab States, in which case Syria or Irak ought to be given to me."

The Prince assured me that he would do everything he could to further my interests which were linked up with his own, and stated that he would raise the whole question with the Sultan when visiting him next day. I ventured to suggest that perhaps the British, the Americans, or even the French, might wish to get in contact with well informed gentlemen, other than professional politicians, who would present clear, unbiased points of view.

A few days after my conversation with Prince Abdul Mejid, I paid a visit to Izzet Pasha to congratulate him on the honourable course he took by resigning his position as Grand Vizier. I asked for news of Arabia and enquired to what point negotiations had reached about its future. "We have drawn up a long communiqué," he replied, "to which we have received no reply or comment from the Allies. At the moment there appear to be two possibilities; the country will either be divided into a number of semi-independent States under the suzerainty of the Turkish Sultan or else these States will be grouped together under one Arab Government. There is even a suggestion that the Pope should control Palestine. If this occurs, I fear the result."

I could see that Izzet Pasha was depressed, so I encouraged him to persist in his endeavours. I knew, however, that the past decisions and policies of the Turks in connection with Arabia had always been wrong, and I realized that they had not the faintest conception of what the Allies thought nor what policy they intended to adopt. They were blinded by their own greed, and I therefore foresaw the complete severance of their connection with the component parts of the Ottoman Empire. What could I say, and what could I do? Everything I said and every opinion I expressed seemed to be ignored. Advice only drew suspicion on to me. The issue of Arabia was being confused with that of the Great War, whereas to my mind, it was entirely separate and independent. Turkish statesmen had never troubled to read books about the conditions of the countries they governed; they had never listened to the advice of influential Arabs and neither had they studied the objects and aims of the outstanding political figures in Europe. They never saw any need to investigate, nor reason to enquire into questions of this nature, and they suppressed the people by force and cruelty. Never did they deign to

The Struggle in Stamboul

accept advice or to recognize public opinion, and they suffered from their domineering pride. Their ignorance of the Mediterranean question; their lack of general knowledge and insufficient understanding caused the government to drift and the Empire finally to sink. The only policy they showed was that of an ignorant spectator.

When I reached home I heard that the Emir Feisal had made a proposal to the Sultan Vahid-ed-Din in which he offered to accept the Sultan as Caliph in return for his own recognition as King of Syria.

As the days passed, both the Turkish Government and the Sultan showed an increasing tendency to ignore the Shereef and the appointment they had given him. Contact had already been established between the Emir Feisal and the government of the Sultan, who believed that the security of his throne would be more assured if he recognized those who had rebelled against him as opposed to those who had remained steadfast in their loyalty. The Shereef Ali Haider, therefore, thought his best chances lay in establishing direct contact with the British authorities, and sought to get permission for his son, Abdul Mejid, to proceed to London. Obstacles, however, were placed in his way.

On the 23rd November, the *Vekil* of Ibn Rashid called and informed me that he had written a petition to the King of England and sent it through Dr. Frew, a Presbyterian Minister, who appeared to have an intimate association with the British Embassy. The gist of the petition was a statement that, in the past, the dynasty of Ibn Rashid had been loyal to the Turkish Government, but that now, owing to the changed condition of affairs, he wished to be of service to the British Empire. That evening Dr. Frew called on me. He asked if I spoke French and we conducted our conversation in that language. I remarked that I had met him several years ago. He told me that he had been an exile in Broussa and Eski Shehir for some years where he had met many interesting Arabs.

"I understand your son wants to go to England," he said, "but I fear that the question of a passport will be difficult. It will be useless for him to see the Admiral who is far too occupied with other matters, but special political officers are due to arrive in the course of the next few days and it would be wiser to wait for them. Since the English are the friends of Hussein they may not desire to see your son. To depose Hussein in your favour would require a tremendous effort."

A Prince of Arabia

"You observe," I said, "how I speak French, but my sons have all learnt English. This was not achieved in one day, and you probably know that they were sent to English schools."

"I was quite aware that they had had English training," he replied.

"I have never been double faced," I continued. "Throughout my career I have been loyal to the Turks, but I and my friends are now prepared to be faithful friends to England if she so desires. As there are many supporters of Hussein so there are many of mine. If England does not accept us as friends, then those who support me will not be friendly disposed towards her. I now propose friendship with England, and I trust that the Arabian question will be settled as speedily as possible. Just because of what Hussein has done, is England going to ignore the interests of other Arabs? That would indeed be a strange policy. It was only by a stroke of evil fortune that I did not happen to be in the position of Hussein as Emir of Mecca at the commencement of the War."

Dr. Frew remarked that luck assisted Hussein to obtain the position he had reached.

"Hussein was a rebel," I proceeded, "and the Turkish Government, who was empowered to do so, appointed me Emir in his stead. I went to Medina and later to Damascus and the Lebanon, where I remained for a year and a half until I was invited by the Sultan to return to Stamboul."

"Weren't your sons ever soldiers in the Turkish forces?" he enquired.

"No, never," I replied. So the conversation continued, and before he left, he said that he hoped the best means of presenting my case before the British Government would be found.

My son, Abdul Mejid, and my equerry went to see the Grand Vizier, who sat listening to them until he fell asleep! He promised everything that my son asked, but I could not help wondering what value I could attach to such promises. Both Fethi Bey, the late Minister for Foreign Affairs, and his successor, Rechid Pasha, came to see me. The former was depressed and did not think that the British would accept the proposals of President Wilson, and neither did I. Rechid Pasha, on the other hand, attached great importance to the ideas of the President.

"What form of government do you think will be given to Arabia?" I enquired.

"I think," Rechid Pasha declared, "that small independent governments will be formed. The British do not desire a strong Arab

The Struggle in Stamboul

Government but they would like to be protectors of weaker ones." This sounded sense to me.

From another visitor I enquired for news of Talaat Pasha, and was informed that he had written to the Sultan stating that, if he could obtain a promise from the British Government which would guarantee the freedom of Turkey, the members comprising the Committee of Union and Progress would be willing to promise never to return to Turkey during the remainder of their lives.

As time passed, I felt I had been badly used by the Turkish Government, who now even failed to recognize the appointment they had given me. In public, there was a tendency on the part of officials to shun my company as though they were ashamed. My fault lay in remaining loyal to this government who had let me down, and I enquired if they were trying to revenge themselves on me for the rebellion of Hussein. A friend suggested that I should go to Damascus, gather a party around me and obtain the rulership of Syria. If the Turkish Government had sanctioned this suggestion, they would at least have shown that they regarded me as the rightful candidate. I realized that the government was helpless to maintain my rights in the Hedjaz, but for its own honour, I imagined it would have championed my nomination for Syria. As, at that time, it was decided that there should be a ruler of Syria, I considered that I was the fit and proper person to be placed there as opposed to an outsider. But I saw that loyalty was of no avail, and that only money could restore to me the position of dignity which was my heritage. I had no money.

In conversation with Arabs from Syria I understood that the last thing they desired was the protection of the French, but they earnestly wished for an Emir to be placed over them. The idea was, of course, sound, but I wondered how many of them had the strength of mind to insist on what they wanted.

Although he had been scarcely a month in office there was a general feeling that Tewfik Pasha was not suitable for the position of Grand Vizier at this difficult moment in the history of the country. He was conscientious and persistent, but his real helpers were few, and he got into one difficulty after another. He was old, I felt pity for him, and wondered if he went, what better man there was to replace him.

I went to see Izzet Pasha and met at his house a deputy who remarked that it was a good thing for me that I had left the Lebanon when I did. "No, sir," I replied. "You are mistaken. If I had remained, I should have become a prisoner of the British, and I wish

A Prince of Arabia

I had. They at least would have respected me and the position that I held. In my present circumstances I might be a criminal from the way I am treated. Even the newspapers have suggested that I should be deprived of the Emirate. The Government look on and do nothing. My greatest mistake is that I have shown loyalty to you." I was irritated and left them to talk to one another. It was disgusting at this time to see the way in which the Turks were prepared to sacrifice everything and anybody in order to further their own interests.

Although the Armistice had been signed and hostilities had virtually come to an end, there was a corner of the former Turkish Empire which still held out valiantly against the foe. This was Medina, where Fakhri Pasha refused to recognize the terms of the Armistice with reference to the surrender of the holy city. Pressure, however, was now so strong from all sides that the gallant Pasha was forced to bow to the inevitable. In order to make the surrender less humiliating, Ali Haider prevailed upon the Sultan to insist that Fakhri and his men should be allowed to retire before the conquerors entered.

I was concerned about the fate of Medina which still held out under the gallant Fakhri Pasha, so, on the 17th December, I decided to obtain a personal interview with the Sultan. At the Palace where I met Shereef Nassir, the brother of Hussein, the First Chamberlain remarked on the state of affairs and how useless he considered the Cabinet.

"They have quite forgotten my existence," I said. "I would like you to know, however, that I still have great respect for the Sultan, but too late, Bey Effendi, I have learnt the lesson that loyalty brings no reward."

I entered the presence of the Sultan, who received me with his usual courtesy, and he, too, declared how disturbed he was at the general political situation. "The clouds," I said, "with God's grace, will pass from overhead, and Your Majesty will see the country in the state he wishes."

I then announced that I had a request to make. "You are welcome," he replied, "and so far as it lies within my power, I will grant it."

"It is because you are the Caliph that I appeal to you," I began. "I hear that Fakhri Pasha has not accepted the Armistice, and that you are sending a special official to order him to surrender Medina to the British together with all his troops. Since I heard this I have

The Struggle in Stamboul

been very unhappy. You in your position are obliged to accept the conditions of peace, but surely you can make the British understand how the whole Moslem world would feel about this. Beg them, I pray, to allow Fakhri Pasha and his army to leave Medina in peace and be transferred elsewhere."

On the next day, I again visited the Palace.

"The Government has considered your request," said the Sultan, "and the soldiers with their arms will be transferred to Turkish territory. Medina, I can assure you, will suffer no harm. I myself have issued the necessary orders to the Minister of War." I thanked him.

A week later I had a visit from Zehni Pasha, the late *Wali* of the Hedjaz, who told me that he considered we ought to be friends of Great Britain but he wanted no one to know that was his opinion. He then proposed that I should form a third political party with him which would differ both from the Union and Progress and the opposition.

"I never join a political party," I said. "I have never been a member of the Union and Progress and neither have I ever associated myself with the opposition. I have, however, friends in all parties who respect me and have confidence in my friendship."

"In that case," he said, "I shall have nothing more to do with you." Other words passed and he left. I could not think what his object was in thus approaching me, and I wondered if there was any deep significance. I liked the man well enough, but for some reason or another, I never felt that I could trust him.

The question of Palestine and its future now began to disturb the minds of many, and I heard that Hussein had protested to the Allies against the establishment of a Jewish government. In the meantime the Shereef Feisal had sent the following appeal to the Turks: "I and my Father have never really fought against the Turks to whom we are attached by the bonds of Islam. In Syria the majority of the people are still loyal to the Turkish regime and the minority that opposes them is of no importance. The British have hurt the feelings of all true Moslems by their proposal to form a Jewish home in Palestine, and I am therefore sending to you Nourri Said Pasha as my deputy, in order to unite us again in mutual interest and friendship."

This appeal came at an unfortunate moment during the peace negotiations, so the Turkish Government merely replied that they were not in a position to do anything at the moment, but thanked the Shereef Feisal for his desire to reunite the world of Islam.



1919-1921

The Treaty of Sévres and the Birth of a New Turkey

Trouble in Syria

The Rulership of Mesopotamia

Ali Haider as a Claimant to the Throne



Chumlijah, 1919

Standing: Shereefs, Princes and Equerries

Seated: The Emit A) Haider. Shereefa Sfynch [daughter], Prince Abdul Mejid [the last Caliph],
Said Hallim Pasha [Grand Vizier]

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE NEW TURKEY

THE STATE OF UNCERTAINTY IN TURKEY increased with the disinclination of the Allies to decide upon the terms of peace. The Turks, at first, were prepared to submit to almost any peace terms the Allies cared to impose, but the Peace Conference in Paris was not only absorbed in other problems considered more urgent, but also waited the lead and practical help promised by the United States. Although much of the disastrous delay in providing an early settlement with Turkey is attributable to the statesmen of Great Britain and France, the United States, by the uncertain and wavering policy she displayed, is equally to blame. President Wilson certainly rendered useful service, but his failure to keep a closer grip upon realities resulted in tragedy. He suggested a Commission of Inquiry in Turkey "to elucidate the state of opinion and the soil to be worked on by any mandatory." Such a proposal was well suited for any political difficulty in Great Britain or the United States, but, in the Near East, no process could have been devised as more likely to rouse passion and resentment.

The Commission began its labours which enabled the Peace Conference to shelve the question of Turkey and turn to other matters deemed more important. But before the Commission, on which in the end only America was represented, had gone a third of the way through its studies, armed revolt had broken out among the people concerned, and the Allied troops necessary to quell it had been withdrawn.

Italy was the first to show her impatience with this method of dealing with Turkey. She startled Paris by seizing Adalia and virtually annexing that portion of Asia Minor. The Greeks, alarmed, feared that this was only a prelude to an encroachment on their aspirations in the Smyrna district, and Venizelos, the most astute of all politicians, began to press the advantages which would arise from a Greek occupation of the

A Prince of Arabia

Smyrna vilayet. His arguments were so plausible that the Allied Statesmen readily swallowed his deadly suggestion. No action of the Allies was more unwise than this step, which did more damage than any other taken at Paris. That Greece, the hereditary enemy of Turkey should be allowed to invade that country was preposterous. The result was to rouse the disheartened Turk to a frenzy of passion and cause untold suffering to thousands of innocent people.

The British Foreign Office and War Office sent repeated warnings; protests followed in quick succession from representatives in Turkey as well as from the Turks themselves, but all were unheeded. A large Allied Fleet anchored in the Gulf of Smyrna on one fatal day in May 1919. A few hours later, transports, containing 25,000 Greek troops, crept up under cover of the warships and anchored in a convenient position whence, on the following day, they could proceed alongside to discharge the men. In a last desperate effort to avert what every one on the spot—with the exception of the Greeks—knew would be a calamity, the Turkish Governor went on board the *Iron Duke*, the British flagship, to appeal to the Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, against the proposed landing.

"Please land yourselves," pleaded the Governor, "or let the occupation of Smyrna be undertaken by the French, and we will accept it as the fortune of War. But if the Greeks land—and we realize they can do so under cover of your guns—I can assure you that it will rouse the whole country to arms, and no Turk will rest until he has driven the last Greek out of the country. Think what that means, and the needless tragedy it is bound to bring to thousands of homes—both Greek and Turk."

But the Admiral was powerless. It was decreed by the Supreme Council that the Greeks should land, and no further protest could alter this decision. Accordingly, on the following day, the landing took place accompanied by scenes of disgusting brutality which were a disgrace to the white ensign under whose protection they took place. British sailors, who were in a position to witness the atrocities committed by the Greeks on the waterfront of Smyrna, had to be kept below deck in

The New Turkey

order that their sense of discipline should not be unfairly strained. From this very moment the Turkish nation—realizing that it was not Great Britain they had to endure and for the time obey, but Greece, the despised foe of generations—became uncontrollable. The Greeks were now in a position to strangle the export trade of Anatolia at any moment, and this loosing of the Greek army into Asia Minor boded the destruction and death of the Turkish nation.

Turkey was reborn by the violent passions which were now aroused, and a new National party was to take root and gather strength in the heart of Asia Minor. Gradually two governments arose in the country, one at Constantinople upholding the authority of the Sultan, but supported precariously on the bayonets of the Allies, and the other at Angora under the inspiring leadership of Moustapha Kemal owning allegiance solely to what they knew to be the best interests of their country. For the situation to be fully appreciated, it must be realized that no terms relating to the Peace Treaty with Turkey had yet been enunciated. The Committee of Inquiry was still working.

The failure of the Allies to exact, by the terms of the Armistice, the surrender of all arms and war material, enabled the Turks to equip themselves with rifles and artillery and a sufficient reserve of ammunition. In August, emboldened by the hesitancy of the Powers, the National Committee publicly assembled at Erzeroum and proclaimed a Provisional Government. It is noteworthy to record that a resolution was adopted that the national forces and the national will should be directed to the maintenance of the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire *for the preservation of the Sultanate and the Caliphate*.

The question of the Caliphate was still of the utmost concern to Turkey, and produced reactions throughout the whole Moslem world. The continuance of its existence was imperative to the interests of the Shereef, who realized that so long as it lasted he still had a hope of achieving his ambition. The threat to the Caliphate was used as a means of inciting disorder among the Moslem communities in India and elsewhere, who now gave their sympathy and support to the Turkish nation

A Prince of Arabia

in the belief that, in fighting for their independence, they were fighting also for the preservation intact of the institution which symbolized Moslem solidarity, particularly to those of the Sunni communion.

In March 1919, Damad Ferid Pasha, the brother-in-law of the Sultan, had superseded Tewfik Pasha as Grand Vizier. His policy was essentially submissive and closely allied to that of the Sultan. In the eyes of patriotic Turks, both were ready to sacrifice the best interests of their country in order to appease the Allies and render their own positions more secure. Those who were staunch and loyal were to be ruthlessly swept aside and Ferid, together with the Sultan, was later to be regarded—perhaps a little unjustly—as the real betrayer of Turkey.

Meanwhile, in the Hedjaz, Hussein had openly proclaimed himself King of the Arabs, which alarmed his powerful neighbours, Ibn Saoud and the Imam of Yemen, sowing the seeds of a bitter quarrel which was to end in his expulsion by the Wahhabi ruler. By his assumption of that title he became no longer an object of veneration as Grand Shereef in the eyes of the Moslem world: rather was he an object of hate as a traitor against the Caliph, an object of derision as a King of a petty bankrupt State, and an object of suspicion among his neighbours as to how far his supporters would carry him. In fact, there was a vast difference between the King of an independent bankrupt State and the Grand Shereef with ample salary and no expenses. Of his sons, Feisal dreamt that he would establish an Arab kingdom in Syria, Abdullah was marked out for Iraq, and Ali was to go to the Yemen if the Imam did not swear allegiance and pay homage.

This was all particularly galling to the Shereef Ali Haider who was a victim, not only to a combination of unfortunate circumstances, but also to the unswerving loyalty he had always shown towards the Sultan. The very government for whom he had worked now virtually disowned him, and did nothing to present his case to the Allies as worthy of consideration for the rulership of one or other of the Arab States in course of formation. On the contrary, a tissue of lies was connected with his name, and it needed no small effort on the

The New Turkey

part of his friends to expose them. Another eighteen months, however, were to pass before the Shereef was officially deprived of the Emirate by those whom he had served so faithfully.

The most powerful opponent of the Shereef and the one who did him most harm was Damad Ferid Pasha, the new Grand Vizier. Ali Haider disliked and regretted the influence he had over the Sultan, and he considered that he used his power in an unjust, arbitrary and personal manner. He made a scape-goat of the Shereef in order to please the British who wanted Arabian affairs arranged as rapidly as possible, and Hussein acknowledged as King of the Hedjaz. In order to save the Sultan on the one hand, and himself as Grand Vizier on the other, Ferid sacrificed the Shereef Ali Haider and did what he thought would be most acceptable to the British. Largely through the medium of the Presbyterian missionary, Dr. Frew, the Shereef became acquainted with a number of British officers who helped to bring his case to the notice of the authorities. In October 1919, Ferid was forced to resign in order to make way for a Government which could better bridge the gap between the Sultan on the one hand, and Moustapha Kemal on the other.

To the new Grand Vizier, Ali Riza Pasha, Ali Haider appealed for a consideration of his rights in the Hedjaz, but, though he was received with attention and apparent understanding, nothing was ever done.

About this period, Ali Haider began to make contact with the Allied forces. He met and showed hospitality to many British officers; Admiral Bristol, the American representative, paid him a visit, and the Shereef's son, Abdul Mejid, saw General d'Esperey who said he had written to Clemenceau about the Emir's candidature for the throne of Syria.

At last, more than a year after the Armistice, the British Prime Minister announced on the 18th December 1919 that Great Britain, France and Italy, unable to wait any longer for the co-operation of the United States, were about to deal with the Turkish problem. Many suggestions were then advanced as to the form which the peace settlement should take, but no one saw the real foundation on which a permanent peace could be built.

A Prince of Arabia

The Turks were to be utterly crushed and, in Arabia, Hussein and his sons were to obtain rewards for their assistance in the break up of the Ottoman Empire. They were to be imposed on Arab States whose mixed populations might have desired quite different solutions for their destiny, and in the Hedjaz, where the people had for years hoped to get rid of Hussein, he was to be installed and recognized as King. Free and independent Sheikhs were to be his bond men. Very naturally they protested and a continual state of unrest persisted.

The Shereef Ali Haider saw the favourable position which Hussein had established with the British Government. At the same time, he doubted if Hussein would be able to retain his position in the Hedjaz for any length of time in face of the opposition that surrounded him, and the refusal of the tribes to acknowledge his jurisdiction. As to the sons of Hussein, the Shereef failed to see why any of them should reap such great rewards for the efforts they had made on behalf of their father.

These contentions of the Shereef were quite understandable and, from his point of view they were perfectly right. Equally unassailable were the arguments of the British. The Arab Revolt had been of material assistance to the British forces operating in Palestine; of that there is no doubt whatever, although historians may disagree on the extent of the value ascribed to the Revolt. In return for this assistance, which shortened the duration of hostilities and probably spared the lives of many a British soldier, promises had been made to gratify the territorial ambitions of Hussein and his sons. The wisdom of those promises may be questionable, but in the heat of war it is asking much of human nature to enquire too deeply into such questions or to study the aspirations and desires of people who are of no account so far as the winning of the war may be concerned. It is easy to inflame ignorant masses with the spirit of a crusade; it is not easy to dispel illusions when that crusade has been accomplished.

When the first World War was over the principal difficulty that faced the Allies was the redemption of all those promises that had been made, and it was found that many of those

The New Turkey

promises were impossible to fulfil. No more glaring example was to be found than in the resettlement of the Near East, where the promises made to the Arabs, the Jews and the French, conflicted in such a way as to produce a sore that is as grievous to-day as it was then. In order, therefore, to console a wounded conscience it was natural that there should be a tendency to favour the sons of Hussein, who considered they were entitled to the magnanimity of Great Britain. It was hard and tragic for the Shereef Ali Haider, who had lived such an upright and straightforward life, and whose influence for good would have been invaluable had a position of dignity been found for him. To him the Turkish Government owed a solemn duty and had they pressed his claims for recognition, as it was the right of the Shereef to expect, it is possible that justice could have been done without in any way conflicting with the interests of those the British Government considered it their duty to reward.

At the end of 1919 there commenced a correspondence between the Shereef Ali Haider and the British Government concerning his candidature for the rulership of one of the Arab States. It was mostly conducted through British officials in Constantinople, and in the end he did receive a statement to say that his claims would be considered equally with those of the sons of Hussein. It was an empty statement as time eventually showed.

On the 16th December 1919, the diary of the Shereef continues:

The American College now influenced a number of Turks who, regarding President Wilson as omnipotent, started a correspondence with the U.S.A. Marshal Fuad Pasha informed me that he had given £1,000 (T) to a fund in order to enable a delegation to travel to the United States for the purpose of enlisting the interest of Americans in the fate of Turkey. Up to date, I felt that the Americans had never known Turkey, and I do not see why they should wish to do so now. It was a pity that the Marshal should spend his money in this foolish way.

Many foreigners came to visit me, and I was interested in four young naval officers from the *Iron Duke*. I liked these people as they took life so naturally. I saw many officers who spoke of their war

A Prince of Arabia

experiences, but they invariably had an air of enquiry and astonishment. Did they expect, I wondered, for us to be anything other than civilized?

At this time a series of deliberate falsehoods about me was sedulously spread by those who imagined that they had much to lose if I ever acquired a position of authority. The late Grand Vizier, Damad Ferid, was one of the principal offenders in this campaign of calumny and he, I knew, had the ear of the Sultan. But, when I called on His Majesty, he was suffering from an attack of fever.

So the days passed, the uncertainty continued and made the general state of affairs more unsettled than ever. With the Christian New Year, the prospects of a peace settlement seemed more distant than ever, although it did appear as though the Allies were about to deal with the Turkish problem. Meanwhile I had got in touch with the French authorities and on the 25th January 1920, my son, Abdul Mejid, had an interview with General Franchet d'Esperey, who had received a letter from Marshal Gouraud, Governor of Syria, with regard to my claim to the throne of that country. Only out of consideration to the British, with whom they were allied, did they feel obliged to support and uphold the Emir Feisal, but my son was informed that if his rulership was not a success I would probably be nominated to succeed him.

"The French know the character of your Father," added the General, "and I have written fully with regard to his rights that are at present denied him."

A month later I went to see the Sultan.

"I have always been loyal to your Imperial family," I said, "and I now wish to ask you one question. Damad Ferid Pasha, the late Grand Vizier and your own brother-in-law, continually attacks me; and I wondered if, when you hear him speak against me, you derive any satisfaction from what he says. Recent events have swept over me like a storm, ruined the whole of my career and shattered even my courage."

"I neither believe the aimless talk of people," replied the Sultan, "nor do I encourage those who wish to spread idle gossip. I have guarded jealously the respect in which my grandfather held your grandfather, and I have towards you a special affection. In the name of Allah, I have not in my heart the slightest feeling against you, so rest assured of my sincere regret that such falsehoods should have been spread."

I said what was necessary and thanked His Majesty for the sentiments he had expressed.

The New Turkey

Towards the end of March, Feisal was proclaimed King of Syria, and I hear officially that the Turkish Government was carrying on negotiations both with him and his father, Hussein. This information filled me with the utmost disgust. I was the Emir of Mecca whom the Turkish Government had appointed when they officially declared Hussein to be a rebel, and now they were actually negotiating terms of peace with this very man and excluding me entirely from their deliberations. When I approached the Government and expressed to them my injured feelings, they replied that Feisal had appealed to them, and that they were merely responding to his representations. That was all very well, I thought, but where did I come in? Had they no sense of duty towards me who had always shown them the staunchest loyalty?

For a few weeks I made no further move, and during this period I received visits from General Emery and other British officers whose company I enjoyed. The question who should become the ruler in Iraq now occupied the attention of the British Press, and the Sultan expressed the hope that my candidature for that position would be successful. I was advised to write to Lloyd George on the subject and lay my claims before him, since it was ridiculous to suppose that the Arabs would accept any one whose lineage was not of the highest. My position and rank therefore deserved consideration. I realized, however, how limited was the power of the Sultan.

One day, among other visitors, I received a call from Sir William Ramsay, who was introduced to me by Dr. Frew. He was interested in the story of my family and in my own personal affairs.

At the beginning of June I was forced to endure another trouble. An Italian officer came to inform me that they proposed to commandeer my *konak* for additional troops who were expected from Italy, and I was told that they would take possession of it on the following day. To add further insult to this impudent demand they seized an automobile which I had sent for Dr. Frew and Sir William Ramsay. My eldest son, Abdul Mejid, immediately went to the British Embassy and appealed to the Admiral, who was acting as High Commissioner, against the outrageous intention of the Italian authorities. He assured him that he would do all he could but suggested that I should write a letter to the Italian Admiral. I did so at once and sent my sons with the letter, but the Admiral stated that it was no concern of his and that he would forward my objection to the military commander. This was all very unsatisfactory, and we quite expected to be ejected from the *konak* at any moment. The days passed, however; the Italians did not come at the time they

A Prince of Arabia

threatened, and I heard that the British had represented my case as strongly as they diplomatically could.

But the affair was not yet over, and three weeks later, I received another call from the Italian officer who said it was essential that they should take possession of the *konak*, but that I could have nine days' notice to leave. I thereupon sent my son, Abdul Mejid, to the Palace where the Sultan was most sympathetic and ordered the Minister of Foreign Affairs to take up the matter and do everything possible to prevent my having to suffer this indignity. At the same time Dr. Frew informed the British Embassy of the Italian intention, and I felt reasonably confident that I would be left in peace since I had in my possession a letter from the British Admiral to say that I was not to be disturbed. On the following day, however, I received a letter from the Italian Colonel to say that they must have the *konak* in five days' time when they expected fresh troops to arrive from Italy. Abdul Mejid again saw the British Admiral who promised to do his best, but I was now full of despair and started to make tentative arrangements to move over to Chumlijah on the other side of the Bosphorus.

Other circumstances, however, were to drive me from the *konak*. As I was pondering over the series of misfortunes with which I seemed to be afflicted I noticed a smell of burning, and realized that the adjacent buildings were on fire and threatened my own house. Firemen and foreign troops were rushed to the scene and soon everything was chaos. My furniture and other personal belongings were removed from the *konak* to a place of safety from the fire only to offer a temptation to the troops and others who indulged in pillage. Much of it was damaged, many things of value were stolen never to be seen by me again, and I was only able to rescue a small amount of my belongings. Had it not been for the kindness of the Crown Prince, Abdul Mejid, who not only offered the hospitality of his Palace to my entire family, but also took care of whatever property I could place within his walls, the affair for me would have been more disastrous than ever. I owe him a great debt of gratitude that I hope my family will never forget. The *konak* was now in a state which rendered it unfit for further habitation, and I detested it; rooms had been broken into, furniture destroyed or stolen, and the whole saturated with water. So I decided to move everything over to Chumlijah where I eventually settled with my family in comparative comfort. By an irony of fate, I was informed two days later, that the Italians now no longer wished to commandeer the *konak* since the ships that carried the additional troops had been recalled to Italy on account of some local trouble. I sent a letter of thanks to the British Admiral

The New Turkey

for the consideration he had shown towards me in this matter.

The surroundings at Chumlijah were pleasant, but even there I could find no peace and felt a constant danger to my family. One night I woke to the sound of firing and heard that it was caused by Greek troops who were occupying Yeni-keui. In Pera there was fire, and on the Asiatic side a continuation of the warfare I hoped had ended. How I longed to be allowed to live quietly in Arabia! Here was no rest to the mind, everything was uncertain and it was impossible to understand from the daily papers what actually was happening.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE MESOPOTAMIAN CLAIM

ON THE 10TH JUNE 1920, the ill-advised Treaty of Sèvres—eventually signed two months later—was thrust upon the Turks after an interval of almost two years had elapsed since the conclusion of the Armistice at Mudros. Turkey was not only to be crushed and dismembered, but the severed limbs were to be distributed among Christian Powers, certain of whom had been hated and despised by the Turks for generations. The clauses producing the most resentment were those relating to the cession of Smyrna and Thrace to Greece, and the reimposition of the Capitulations. The treatment to be accorded to Turkey appeared to be altogether different from that applied to other conquered States. It was freely admitted by the Turks that punishment was deserved, but it was reasonable to expect that territories essentially Turkish should be left to Turkey. Otherwise, it was argued, Turkey would be completely suppressed. The right of the Powers to establish a supervision over Turkey was recognized, but it was surely against the principles of self-determination, for which the Peace Treaty was supposed to stand, to bind the country with the bonds of slavery!

Public opinion in Europe was certainly divided on the question of what treatment ought to be meted out to Turkey. Declarations against the iniquities of the Turks thundered from public platforms; they were denounced in the British Parliament for their organized savagery, and for their treachery to the Powers in entering the War on the side of Germany. To many no fate was bad enough for Turkey, and a popular cry was that she should be completely and utterly destroyed as a nation. How often does History repeat itself! Those who were loudest in their denunciations of Turkey clamoured equally for a rapid demobilization of the troops. Whatever the rights or wrongs of the moral aspect of the Peace terms, the statesmen who laid them down—though well-

The Mesopotamian Claim

informed—were filled with a stubborn short-sightedness. The terms were impracticable as events soon proved, and as those with any grasp of realities always foretold. It was impossible to impose them without the maintenance of considerable force. There was none, and to rely on Greece was sheer folly. Common sense was never lacking to such an extent as when the Powers drew up the Treaty of Sèvres, the terms of which made the National movement under Moustapha Kemal more determined than ever.

How patiently and impatiently the Shereef Ali Haider had waited for this Treaty, the results of which he knew would have a personal effect upon himself! Would he be able to return to Mecca? Would Turkey be able to live as an independent kingdom? Were Moslems—always his first consideration—to be oppressed because some upstarts had driven the country to ruin, and because Turkey had not realized the real object of Germany? He understood punishment for misjudgment and wrongdoing, but he could never forgive an attempt to crush a fallen enemy.

The Shereef was numbered among those responsible Mohammedans who believed that temporal power was essential for the growth of Islamic civilization which was needed, not as a rival but as a foil to the Christian. Turkey was the only Great Power left to Islam; if Turkey was destroyed, a fatal blow would be dealt to the entity of Islam. These views were shared by Indians and Afghans, and many who owed allegiance to the British Empire; they found expression in countless protests which passed unheeded.

The terms of the Treaty relating to Arabia required Turkey to surrender all her Arab provinces, to recognize specifically the independence of the Kingdom of the Hedjaz, and the British Protectorate over Egypt and the Sudan. To accept the Treaty was to accept the doom of the Ottoman Empire, and Turkey now became powerless to exert any influence on the rulership of the Arab countries she had formerly governed.

On the subject of the countries bordering the Eastern Mediterranean, the Shereef realized that the question was largely strategical, so far as the Great Powers were concerned. Each was fearful of the other acquiring influence which would

A Prince of Arabia

choke vital lines of communication, dominate the Suez Canal and control the supplies of oil which were known to exist in vast quantities in the Arabian deserts. It was from this point of view that the Shereef regarded the Zionist policy in Palestine in which he naturally had a deep interest. He believed that the primary object prompting the British Government to enforce it was a desire for security, but he maintained that greater security could be assured to the British Empire by a policy aimed at the education and conciliation of the Arabs.

He had nothing against the Jews as Jews, among whom were numbered some of his personal friends, but he failed to see why the Arabs should be driven out of their own country in order to make way for what would undoubtedly become a Hebrew kingdom. The country had been Arab for generations and, to him, it would be just as logical for the people of Great Britain to acquiesce in a Danish or French occupation of a corner of England. Nothing was more likely to aggravate the relations—hitherto friendly—between Jews and Arabs than this policy which he prophesied would bring continual trouble to Great Britain in the future. He knew that Great Britain had strength and could, if she liked, keep a firm hand on the country; but he believed that one day the Arabs would rise and massacre the Jews without discrimination.

The Shereef was tolerant, but far-sighted. He knew that opposition would be prompted chiefly by fear; fear of Jewish domination that would rapidly encroach on the rights of more Arabs. The power and wealth of world Jewry he knew to be enormous and who, he argued, would stay their hand if they intended to expand still farther? Doubtless the Shereef would have supported the creation of an essentially cultural Jewish State owing allegiance to an Arab Government, in the same way as the State of Monaco is under the sovereignty of France.

Now that Feisal had been enthroned in Damascus, the one hope left to the Shereef Ali Haider was so to impress his case upon the Government of Great Britain that he would stand a chance in the selection of a candidate to rule Iraq; but so strong and influential were those who opposed his candidature that his prospects of success were slender. He did hope, however, that he would be given equal opportunities with other

The Mesopotamian Claim

candidates. The following letter from Admiral de Robeck, then British High Commissioner in Constantinople, encouraged him in this belief:

British High Commission,
Constantinople.

M. 1078. 30th July 1920.

YOUR HIGHNESS,

With reference to my letter of 19th May acknowledging, on behalf of Earl Curzon of Kedleston, the receipt of Your Highness' letter dated 29th March, I have the honour to state that I am instructed by His Majesty's Government to inform you that when the moment arrives for the installation of a native ruler in Mesopotamia to be rendered possible, they have no intention as Mandatory Power, of making any effort to compel the acceptance of a special candidate.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the choice of their future ruler should be left to the arbitrament of the population, which will be given full opportunity of expressing its wishes in this matter.

I have the honour to be,

Your Highness' Obedient Servant,

[Signed] J. M. DE ROBECK,

High Commissioner.

This letter led the Shereef to suppose that he would be given equal chances with others to have his case laid before the people of Iraq but, unlike the successful candidate, constant obstacles appeared to be placed in the path of any one who was prepared to advocate his claims in that country. That he had an international reputation among Moslems in different parts of the world may be gauged from the following appeal sent by the Moslems of the Dutch East Indies to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Constantinople:

"We 40 millions of Muslimin in the Netherlands Indies strongly protest against the usurpation of the rights of Muslimin by Emir Hussein, and we request our paternal government to lay this before the competent quarters, and also we request our Khalif, Sultan Vahid-ed-Din, to dismiss Emir Hussein from Mecca and nominate in his place

A Prince of Arabia

Shereef Ali Haider Pasha or other faithful servant of Islam who may please our Khalif, Sultan Vahid-ed-Din."

Towards the end of July 1920 the Emir Feisal, who had been proclaimed King of Syria early in the year, began to resent the French influence in that country and declared open revolt against the Mandatory Power, with the result that he was eventually forced to leave Syria altogether. According to the diary of the Shereef, the Emir Feisal had come to some understanding with Moustapha Kemal in Angora and was prepared to lead a similar revolution, and on the 31st July he writes:

"The papers say that the French have requested Feisal to leave Damascus. The Justice of God is now beginning to manifest itself."

The departure of Feisal from Syria altered the situation as regards the rulership of Iraq, for it brought into the field a new candidate whose influence among certain highly placed Englishmen was bound to react strongly in his favour to the detriment of the prospects of the Shereef Ali Haider. On the other hand, the rulership of Syria now became vacant and, if his claims were not met with regard to Iraq, there was still a possibility that Ali Haider might be appointed to the Emirate of Syria. But, after her experience with Feisal, France was loath to try another experiment with a new appointment. Nevertheless, the Shereef Ali Haider reopened communication with General Gouraud, the French High Commissioner in Syria, through General Franchet d'Esperey in Constantinople.

On the 6th August 1920 the Shereef records a conversation he had with a French senior military officer:

Amongst other visitors I received a French military officer and we discussed the situation in Syria.

"In 1919," he said, "France settled the form which the Government of Syria should take, and it was imagined that Feisal had agreed to all the conditions then laid down, for he signed everything required. General Gouraud himself respects all Moslems and has given the country every facility to develop, but Feisal intrigued and persisted in his opposition. Finally he had recourse to arms and was therefore forced to leave the country. Hussein asked Lloyd George to mediate

The Mesopotamian Claim

in the dispute between his son and the French Government as I know he is upset at what has taken place."

I enquired as to the prospects of Feisal returning to Syria. "If the French Government ever forgives Feisal I will be astonished. I only wish the British would pay more consideration to their Allies and not compel us to appoint rulers we do not want."

"There is no doubt," I said, "that Syria will make progress, but she needs the guidance of France just as I also require her help. I wait for your country to show me what to do."

"The object of the French in Syria," said the Frenchman, "is to help the country, with as little interference as possible in her domestic politics. France is fatigued and desires no more, and she will do everything necessary for the best interests of the country. General Gouraud continually talks about the future of Syria as an independent kingdom, and the softness of his heart towards Moslems is well known to all. To-night I will write and tell him that I have met you."

"My own idea," I said, "is that the best policy of France is to leave Syria for a time in its present condition in order to allow matters to quieten down. Then she can make up her mind as to the form any future government should take."

Lies and distortions were again being spread about me and these, I knew, originated from high quarters (Damad Ferid); so on the 26th August I paid a visit to the Sultan.

"I will receive insults from no one," I said. "You must do something to prevent these attacks which are made against me as I can stand them no longer."

"People should show you nothing but reverence and respect," said the Sultan. "We all respect you and no one should have the impertinence to say or write anything against you. If anything more is said, let me know immediately through Yaver Pasha" (the First Chamberlain).

His Majesty certainly seemed to be upset over what had annoyed me, and assured me that he would allow no one to say anything further. He then enquired after my son, Abdul Mejid, who had recently broken his leg, and, after further assurances, I took my departure.

Among the forces comprising the Allied occupation of Constantinople the Shereef took the greatest interest in the British Fleet, for which he never ceased to have admiration. From time to time he records watching the warships proceed to sea for exercises, and on more than one occasion his sons were

A Prince of Arabia

invited on board to witness manœuvres and exercises. Of an evening, from his attractive grounds at Chumlijah, he would watch the ships lying at their moorings in the Bosphorus and express the regret that Turkey had never bothered to create a fleet to "decorate this lovely sea."

"As I thus gazed," he writes, "I would think of the present state of affairs and the uncertain future. I appealed to God to allow this beautiful country to remain in the hands of the Moslems."

With British officers the Shereef's relationship was always most cordial, there being many who took a keen personal interest in his position, and desired to help him establish his claims before the British Government. There is the story of a certain junior naval officer whose enthusiasm for the cause of the Shereef carried him to the verge of indiscretion, and the result of his activities eventually produced the following letter from the Colonial Office to the Admiralty:

"Sir,

"I am directed to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that a telegram has been received from the acting High Commissioner at Baghdad transmitted through the Secretary to the Middle Eastern Conference at Cairo, reporting that the Naqib of Baghdad, President of the Council of State in the present provisional Government of Mesopotamia, has recently received a letter from an officer of His Majesty's Ship —, urging the claims of one Shereef Ali Haider to the rulership of Mesopotamia. The Acting High Commissioner adds that the Naqib was somewhat perturbed at the receipt of such a letter from a British officer.

"It has been ascertained that the officer in question is Mr. —, who is shown in the Navy List as a Midshipman serving in his His Majesty's Ship —.

"The Secretary of State feels sure that the Lords Commissioners will agree with him as to the impropriety of a Junior Naval Officer intervening in political affairs of this description. I am to request that, with Their Lordships' permission, the matter may be brought to the notice of

The Mesopotamian Claim

Mr. —, through the proper channels and that he may be called upon for an explanation of his proceedings.”

The explanation forwarded by the officer in question is of interest in showing how the Shereef was able to impress British officers with his sincerity and honesty of purpose:

Thursday, 21st April 1921.

To the Commanding Officer,

H.M.S. —.

“ Sir,

“ I have the honour to submit the following report in accordance with your instructions.

“ At a social function in Constantinople, November 1919, I made the acquaintance of the Shereef Ali Haider, the living Head Representative of the House of Mohammed the Prophet. He and his sons showed me the greatest hospitality and kindness during my stay in the port. Many British officers and residents in Constantinople assured me that the Shereef's protestations of friendship were genuine and that no possible harm could come out of my accepting his hospitality.

“ Towards the end of August 1920 I was approached by the eldest son of Ali Haider, and asked whether I would write a history of his father's life and claims. This I attempted to do and collected considerable information from various outside sources. There did not seem to me to be any political consideration attaching to the task: in fact I viewed it in the light of a harmless but interesting occupation.

“ As I obtained wider and more detailed information of Ali Haider's position in the Mohammedan world, it became obvious to me that he must be a factor to be considered in any resettlement of the Near East which should be attempted by the Allies. I therefore submitted my manuscript to a personal friend, Captain —, M.P., and asked him whether he thought it advisable to bring my information as to Ali Haider's claims and position to the notice of His Majesty's Government. He replied that this depended

A Prince of Arabia

upon the extent and influence of the following which Ali Haider might be likely to command, and stated in a letter dated 3rd November 1920 that before the latter's claims could be considered he (Ali Haider) should produce evidence under two heads:

- (a) his influence upon the Arab population,
- (b) his genuine friendship towards this country.

" Captain ——— informs me that his letter was inspired by the fact that the information contained in Ali Haider's dossier at the Foreign Office did not tally with the information supplied by me.

" I was personally so convinced of the strength of Ali Haider's claims to the consideration of His Majesty's Government that I endeavoured by correspondence with Ali Haider and his sons to obtain the information desired by Captain ———. I attach a summary of the information which led me to this conclusion.

" Captain ——— expressed to me the opinion that information under heads (a) and (b) above would be valuable, not necessarily to support Ali Haider's claims, but to inform the British Government of his influence in Mesopotamia and the power he might have of disturbing any settlement arrived at in that country.

" I found it difficult to obtain the information desired under heading (a) as I was not personally acquainted with the Arab gentlemen mentioned by Ali Haider as being favourably disposed towards him. I therefore took the step of writing to them entirely in their private capacity, and asking them their opinion of Ali Haider's position.

" I very greatly regret that this proceeding was in any way irregular, but it was entirely in good faith and in the belief that the information would be of use.

" It did not occur to me that a letter of the character which I wrote could be in any way embarrassing to the recipient, and in writing as I did I was moved solely by considerations of my personal friendship with Ali Haider,

The Mesopotamian Claim

and by the desire to obtain information as to the truth of his statements to me.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

*Acting Sub-Lieutenant,
Royal Navy."*

It is needless to add that the officer in question felt slightly aggrieved that the Navy List in the hands of the Colonial Office did not show that he had risen to the more responsible rank of Acting Sub-Lieutenant! Those in authority, however, must have derived a certain amount of amusement at the idea of such a junior officer attempting to influence the rulership of a country, although his action was reprehensible from a Service point of view. It is a tribute to the sense of humour of those in high places that the Admiralty should have replied in terms similar to the following:

Their Lordships are convinced that this officer acted in good faith, but, in future, should any such information come to his hand he should first submit it to his Commanding Officer. They would like to point out that there are many opportunities in H.M. Service for the exercise of originality without taking amateur excursions into the realms of International Politics.

Towards the end of September the Shereef records having his attention drawn to an article written by a well-known Afghan writer in the English Press, and advocating his appointment to the throne of Iraq. The writer in question, Sirdar Ikbāl Ali Shah, was a member of the Central Asian Society and has since written many books on the politics of the Near East. The recommendations of the Sirdar were strongly endorsed by the late Professor D. M. Kay of St. Andrew's University, and it was most suggestive that an Afghan gentleman in the Sirdar's position, who had no personal knowledge of the Shereef at that time, should write to him as follows:

"I have felt all along that someone of Arab royalty should

A Prince of Arabia

assume the government of Mesopotamia, so that we Moslems may cease to fight and endeavour to gain the greatness of Abu Bekir and Omar. On this work of Allah I have worked and am working, and will continue to work till my last breath; may God give me strength! It is for that reason I am writing so much and so often on Eastern problems. I have found that the people of this country have a conception of truth and support me in advocating the rights of a rightful claimant, and I have hopes—by no means small—that if I continue to urge my point, your case will find a very encouraging hearing here. . . . I do the work (of advocating your claims) with no expectation of reward or payment of any kind. I do it thinking I am doing the work of Allah and my duty towards Islam.”

In Stamboul the Shereef felt powerless, himself, to do anything to further his prospects of success, and the atmosphere that surrounded him was one of depression. So he made an effort to be allowed to proceed to Egypt, but the British authorities both in London and Egypt regretted that they could not see their way to accede to his request under the circumstances which then prevailed. Permission was, however obtained—after considerable delay—for his third son, Mohammed Emin, to proceed to England in order that he might complete his education at the University of St. Andrews. Mohammed arrived in England towards the middle of November 1920 and remained at the University for about three years. The Shereef describes his departure on the 6th November.

After lunch I called Mohammed to the garden, kissed him and said farewell. I prayed God to bless him. The train left at 4.0, and the Crown Prince sent his brother-in-law to the station to see him off and also telephoned his salaams and personal good wishes. The Crown Prince never failed in courtesy and delicate attention. May God grant to my son a clear and open road, and God, my Lord, save the boy from harm and from temptation and keep him in good health. God is merciful. May we meet again in some country that we can call our own. God is Father of all and He is great.

The activities of the Shereef were now more circumscribed

The Mesopotamian Claim

than ever; he was deserted by many whom he had formerly trusted as friends; no politician in Turkey who held any position of influence was willing to press for a recognition of his claims, and there were many powerfully placed officials who insinuated a tissue of lies connected with his past career in order to curry favour with the Allies. A small band of devoted friends in England, however, continued to urge his suitability as a candidate for the throne of Iraq, but the dice were too heavily loaded against him in favour of Feisal around whom British and American journalism had spread a halo of romance. A strong body of public opinion in England at this time urged an immediate withdrawal from Mesopotamia where the rebellion of 1920 had cost much, both in lives and in material, but there were many who were carried away by a sentimental interest in the fortunes of the family of Hussein. Under these circumstances it was quite impossible to get any real interest taken in the Shereef Ali Haider. With the statement that any candidate selected by the people of Iraq would be approved by H.M. Government, the Shereef and his friends had to be content, but he rightly felt that unless he was able to go himself, or send a representative, to that country with the full approval of the British Government, he stood no chance against the intrigues and machinations of others.

When Sir Percy Cox arrived in Iraq as High Commissioner in the autumn of 1920, he decided to give immediate assurance of the British intentions, and forthwith nominated an Arab Provisional Government. An electoral law was to be got ready with all speed, after which elections for a Constituent Assembly would be held. According to a special correspondent of *The Times*, writing on the 27th December 1921, this Assembly would be absolutely free to decide the future Constitution of Iraq. It might decide for a Mesopotamian Republic, of which there were many advocates; or for a democratic constitutional Monarchy; or for a Monarchy with large prerogatives. It might select its own ruler, Arab or Turk, Mesopotamian or imported. It might, if so disposed, refuse a mandate to Great Britain.

These assurances were issued freely to the Provisional Government and to the people of Iraq, and the electoral law

A Prince of Arabia

was drafted and finished by the end of January 1921. From then, until the era of the Cairo conference in the spring, it was announced continually that its promulgation was imminent. But when the High Commissioner left for Cairo the long expected electoral law still lay unseen within his desk. It was never published, neither did a Constituent Assembly ever meet, and not one of the promises with which the new regime was inaugurated in the autumn of 1920 was fulfilled. Yet the Cairo conference was able to decide that Iraq should have a king and who that king should be.

An explanation of how this disastrous wreckage of the High Commissioner's good intentions came about was published in *The Times* of the 27th December 1921, where the influence of those who supported the family of Hussein is suggested as the underlying cause. "The Emir Feisal's attempt to kick over the parental traces and set himself up as a monarch in Syria failed, owing to his inability to accommodate himself to France, the Mandatory Power. At Damascus in April of 1920 he was crowned *King of Syria* and his brother, Abdullah, now in Trans-Jordan, was hailed as *King of Mesopotamia*. But nothing came of this bold bluff. Nevertheless, neither he nor his pan-Arab friends despaired. They next conceived the plan of finding a throne for Feisal in Mesopotamia. A plan was laid, which has been diligently pursued, and has succeeded." It was this plan which led to the scrapping of our solemn pledges and involved us in difficulties with the French.

On the 17th May 1921, the Shereef Ali Haider first hears of the appointment of Feisal and writes:

It appears that Feisal is to be King of Iraq. This is chance-luck. There is nothing for me to do beyond the exercise of patience. If I were to say that I do not regret this appointment it would not be true. It has been made in spite of the fact that no individual has previously been named for Iraq, and that I had been promised an equal chance. I entered as a candidate because no one had yet occupied this position. In any case it is obvious that the British do not trust me. Everything is in God's hands. He is great.

This news, however, did not tempt the Shereef to stoop to any underhand intrigue or revile those who had assisted his

The Mesopotamian Claim

discomfiture. His reply to those who approached him to form a party in Iraq and work there for his own interests is characteristic:

Some friends came and asked me to collect the Iraqi officers here (in Stamboul) in order to form a Committee for me to work in Iraq. "I have never yet belonged to any political Committee," I said, "and I will never do any underhand work in Iraq or elsewhere. If the British were to give me permission to do so, that would be different. My prestige should be sufficient. I will not work in secret, and it would be most difficult for me to do so. If the people of Iraq desire me to be their ruler God will show me. I do not want to be a curse on their head. What God wants, He will give me." These friends accepted my answer and left.

A few days later the Shereef received news from Iraq of a strong opposition to the acceptance of Feisal and feared there would be bloodshed. The cry of this party he records as being, "We will not accept the Emir chosen by the British: we will be free to choose our own ruler and we desire to be bound to the Caliphate." But the Shereef took no steps to associate himself with any opposition in Iraq, and just waited on events with that dignity and patience which was such a marked feature of his character.

Thus ended the struggle, if struggle it can be called, for the rulership of Iraq, but the Shereef retained hopes that he could still be of use in shaping the destinies of the new Arabia by being appointed to the Emirate of Syria. He records, at this time, an interview with a French officer who stated that Turkey and France between them would soon settle the Syrian question. This officer added how displeased France was that Feisal should have been enthroned in Iraq.

There were, however, other parts of Arabia besides Syria and Iraq which were of special concern to the Shereef, since the intransigence and short sightedness of Hussein had brought about a most unsettled and uncertain state of affairs in the Hedjaz. Ever since the armistice was signed negotiations of sorts had taken place between Hussein and the Turkish Government, and the Shereef Ali Haider records how Shereef Nassir, the brother of Hussein, was used as an intermediary.

A Prince of Arabia

The reader will recall the attitude adopted in the Turkish Senate by Shereef Nassir when Hussein raised the Standard of Revolt in 1916. He was now a strong supporter of his brother, the reason for which requires no explanation.

It sickened the Shereef to see how the Turkish politicians thought it wiser for their own sakes to come to some agreement with Hussein and disown him altogether. In December 1920 he writes:

In my opinion Shereef Hussein is playing with these foolish politicians who appear ready to throw away the Caliphate. Hussein himself seems to be adopting a policy of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds and no good can possibly come out of it.

The attacks against the Shereef Ali Haider continued in the Press and elsewhere, and there seemed no redress.

In an Arab newspaper, *Wehil el Basrie*, on the 18th February 1921, I read a long article written against me. I deplored many of the things it said, but dogs generally do bite. It is a newspaper in favour of Shereef Hussein, and also against the British Government.

The assumption by Hussein of the title of King of the Arabs, and his well-known ambition to be recognized Caliph of Islam, had naturally incurred the hostility of Ibn Saoud, the powerful Wahhabi ruler of Nejd who had already begun to carve out for himself what was virtually an Empire in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula. His resentment at the pretensions of Hussein, who declined to treat about the possession of a disputed oasis, had prompted him to attack the Hedjaz, but he yielded for a time to British representations—and a subsidy of £5,000 a month from the British taxpayer—and desisted. He then diverted his forces against the Shammar and his old adversary Ibn Rashid whom he killed in August 1921. All these dissensions in Arabia distressed the Shereef Ali Haider very deeply and he writes:

I regret these events. It is not the time now for these two leaders in Arabia to make attacks upon each other, but they should join forces against the common enemy. No one seems to have a head capable of thinking, no one understands, and even if everything was candidly explained, people would still refuse to grasp the reality of the situation.

The Mesopotamian Claim

The subsequent events which occurred in Arabia and their reactions on the Shereef Ali Haider must be left to a later chapter. Meanwhile, in Turkey, the National Party that had proclaimed a provisional Government in August 1919 had received a fresh impetus from the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres; its leaders had sworn resistance to the bitter end, and had threatened the Sultan and his Ministers with outlawry if they dared to complete their betrayal of Turkey and of Islam. To a great extent the sympathies of the Shereef were with the National Movement that sought for a revision of the iniquitous Treaty which had been imposed, but he disliked the hostile attitude that was shown towards the Sultan, who was really powerless in the hands of the Allies to do any more than he did. He records how Prince Farouk Effendi, the son of the Crown Prince Abdul Mejid, went to Angora in order to offer his services to Moustapha Kemal, and how the latter refused to accept them. The Prince then returned to Stamboul, much to the regret of the Shereef, who saw in this the hostile tendency of the Nationalists towards any one connected with the Sultan.

In order to implement the Treaty of Sèvres, the Greek forces had advanced both in Thrace and Asia Minor to the limits set them by the Allies. Their advance was rapid, and the opposition they met was considerably less than had been expected. The National Movement had not yet become sufficiently organized to provide a serious check to the progress of the Greek forces. Towards the end of March 1921, however, the Greek offensive was arrested by a severe defeat east of Eski Shehir, but the Greeks prepared feverishly for another and greater effort.

At this time internal politics in Greece and the restoration of Constantine to the Throne, causing the temporary eclipse of Venizelos, encouraged the Greek Government to embark on a war with Turkey far beyond the scope of that decreed by the Allied Powers. The Powers, thereupon, warned the Greek Government and disclaimed all responsibility should Greece persist in the renewal of hostilities. Three months later the Greeks reorganized and began their advance into the heart of Anatolia by the recapture of Eski Shehir. On the 23rd July the Shereef writes:

A Prince of Arabia

Eski Shehir is being evacuated. My heart is not at rest with this war in Anatolia. No one is gay; the news that filters through sounds strange, and people can scarcely credit what they hear. The Moslem world is in great distress. I hear that Anatolia has ratified the treaty between herself and Russia. This news is very important.

Throughout this period, Ali Haider lived quietly with his family, shutting out his cares and disappointments in the delight he always took in his garden, yet keeping himself fully informed by conversation with numerous visitors who came to call on him. He was always ready to give advice where advice was needed; he never hesitated to help the poor and the weak so far as his diminishing resources permitted. His understanding of the problems of others was a comfort to many, and he maintained his belief that man was fundamentally good even if he was liable to succumb to the temptations of the world.

During the first six months of 1921 his diary merely reports a few personal occurrences, and on the 17th March he records the news of Talaat Pasha's assassination in Berlin. He does, however, tell a whimsical story concerning the last hours of the late Sultan Reched.

Sheikh Ibrahim came to see me and I gave him a gold watch. He was pleased and told me a tale which, if true, is humorous. Sultan Reched would sometimes call this Sheikh, and he did so during his last illness.

"Sheikh Effendim," the Sultan said, "I am ill and I am dying. Whatever you have done to me or I to you we leave with God."

The Sheikh saw a beautiful watch lying near and said: "Effendim, will you please let me have this watch in memory of you?"

"I tell you I am dying," said the Sultan.

"Then, if you are dying, Effendim, of what use can the watch be to you?"

"Give me back the watch," demanded the Sultan, "so that I can see the time, because I am going to die."

The Sultan did not give the watch to the Sheikh, who told me this tale with amusement and pleasure.



1921-1923

Arabia abandoned in the Resurrection of Turkey

The Sultan withdraws Recognition of

Ali Haider as Emir of Mecca

The Treaty of Lausanne

The Kemalists abolish the Sultanate

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE SULTAN WITHDRAWS RECOGNITION

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF 1921, the Sultan Vahid-ed-Din sent his First Chamberlain, Refik Bey to call upon the Shereef with a request that he would resign of his own free will and accord his rights in the Hedjaz. If he did so, it was pointed out, the Turkish Government could more easily come to an understanding with Hussein, and therefore place itself in a more favourable position with the Allies for the retention of the Caliphate in the person of the Turkish Sultan. To this request Ali Haider replied that nothing would induce him to give up any of his rights, though he realized that the Sultan could do with him as he pleased. Refik Bey also took this opportunity to sound the Shereef, on behalf of the Sultan, about his views on the National Movement in Asia Minor. "I would humbly suggest to His Majesty," the Shereef replied, "that he should go at once and lead the movement in person to re-establish the freedom of his country from the unjust and humiliating terms of the Treaty of Sèvres."

The Sultan, however, allowed himself to be led by his Grand Vizier, Damad Ferid, who gave him contrary advice, and even prevailed upon him to dispatch a force against the irregulars of Moustapha Kemel. No sooner had this force penetrated Asia Minor than it melted away, the men deserting to the Nationalist cause.

For some days after this interview with Refik Bey the Shereef heard nothing more and then, to his chagrin, he read in the paper that the Sultan had deprived him of the Emirate of Mecca. At a Cabinet meeting it had been proposed by the Grand Vizier that, in order to cultivate good relations both with the British Government and King Hussein, official recognition of Ali Haider as Emir of Mecca should be withdrawn, and that he should be sacrificed for what they considered to be the best interests of the State. The resolution was approved

A Prince of Arabia

and forwarded to the Sultan who accordingly issued the necessary notice for the dismissal of the Shereef. A few days later the Sultan again sent Refik Bey to Ali Haider in order to try and cover this unfriendly action with plausible explanations.

Refik Bey came to see me with a personal message from the Sultan. He begun by saying that my dismissal was the result of a unanimous decision by the Cabinet. For two or three days the Sultan had considered the resolution which had been forwarded to him, and had then come to the conclusion that it would be best for my ultimate interests if he approved of it. At first he thought that the proposal had been prompted by personal motives on the part of the Grand Vizier but, after full consideration, he believed there was no alternative. I told Refik Bey that I was certain that the whole thing was the work of Ferid, and I could not see what advantage the Government would gain by treating me in this manner. On the contrary, I maintained that if, at the Peace Conference, they had their own Emir they would be in a better position to insist on the recognition of their rights. "However," I added, "if the Sultan desires my dismissal, then I must comply without argument."

"I suggest that you go and discuss the whole matter with the Sultan," replied Refik Bey. I knew that such discussion would be useless, so I did not take his advice. Refik Bey went on to say how important for Moslems in general they considered it to be that there should be a close understanding between Turkey and the Hedjaz. They had to face facts, and it was a fact that Hussein was King of the Hedjaz and likely to remain there.

"That is true," I said, "but surely the question of personality and the honour of Turkey should be taken into account." I said no more, and on Refik Bey's departure, I felt disgusted.

The events of the next two years—1921-3—culminating as they did in the resurrection of Turkey as a strong and independent State are too well known to be repeated in detail. In the autumn of 1921 the series of Greek successes in Anatolia began to give way before the reorganized forces of Moustapha Kemal which received indirect assistance from the internal troubles in Greece. The withdrawal of the Greek troops to the Sakaria river in September proved to be the turning point in the conflict. As the Turkish forces advanced, so the Sultan and his Government became weaker, and the disruptive forces



H.H. Shereef Mohammed Emin
[Third son of Ali Haider]

The Sultan Withdraws Recognition

which destroyed any semblance of Allied unity encouraged the Kemalists still further. Sympathy with the Kemalists was almost universal, and even in India the pro-Turkish agitation had become a menace to the British authorities. To the Shereef Ali Haider this so called Caliphate movement in India was too parochially minded to be of any real value towards the consolidation of Islam. In his opinion, it was used solely as a political weapon to injure the British.

During all this period the Shereef remained in Stamboul, discarded by those in authority and forbidden to move even to Egypt. He was tossed about in the storm of political uncertainty. He was always willing to help those who were in need, but his income was now considerably diminished as many of his investments became worthless. No better picture of the conditions which surrounded him, and of his thoughts towards the events that took place, can be presented than quotations from his diaries.

6th August 1921. My son brought Admiral Sir John de Robeck to visit me, this being the first occasion on which I had the pleasure of meeting this distinguished Naval officer. He was a pleasant man and very fond of horses. Twenty years ago he said he was in Jeddah, and I told him how I regretted that he would find the same conditions to-day which he saw then. He asked me if I preferred living in Stamboul to living in Arabia. Naturally I preferred Arabia; and we spoke of the beauty of that country. I told him that Shereef Hussein used to be as a brother to me; that his sons were as my sons, but now they had all forgotten my rights and treated me in a manner which appeared strange. "Do you know Iraq?" he enquired, and I told him that it had never been possible for me to visit that part of Arabia. We had tea, photographs were taken and, as we sat in the garden, the horses were brought and we watched them. Later, he rode back with my sons, and I asked him to regard my house as his, and if he ever wanted the use of my horses or my car they were at his disposal so long as he remained in the port. I liked him very much indeed.

7th August. It appears that my feeling for the Admiral was reciprocated. He has invited my sons Abdul Mejid and Mohiddin on board the *Iron Duke* to watch Fleet manœuvres.

11th August. My sons returned from the manœuvres. They were received by the Admiral and introduced to the King's son, Prince

A Prince of Arabia

George. They all had lunch together and passed a pleasant day. As he received them, so the Admiral bade them farewell.

20th August. The Italian, Count Caprini, came to pay me a visit. He was very polite and agreeable, showing sympathy with my position. "Have patience," he said. "One day you will return to your own country in a position of responsibility. There is a great future for Arabia." I was sceptical about my own future and showed little hope, but he was quite insistent with his encouragement. "In fifteen days," he said, "I am going to Italy, but I will shortly return. I, myself, am a man of no importance, but I know many great and influential men in my own country and, if there is anything you want me to do or say, I am at your service." I thanked him very much indeed, but I did not take advantage of his offer. I told him of the pleasure I had experienced in making his acquaintance and hoped that I would see him again.

On more than one occasion the Italians proved helpful to members of the Shereefian family and, had the Shereef accepted the offer of Count Caprini, it is possible that he might have been given an influential position in Eritrea. He had received nothing from Great Britain but disappointment, and France was too occupied with her own affairs to trouble much about him at this time.

On the 17th September Ali Haider comments on the strange appearance of the Turkish Princes who had all bought European hats in conformity with the edict from Angora. "But," he adds, "Faith is in the heart and not in appearance; yet they all rush to make the change and I am amazed."

A month later he records with disgust that the Sultan had taken a new wife—a young Circassian girl—who so demanded his attention that he refused to see any visitors. "With the country in its deplorable condition," he writes with his usual understatement, "I feel that his action is unwise."

At this time, owing largely to the influence of General Harington and Admiral de Robeck, permission was obtained for Abdul Mejid, the eldest son of the Shereef, to pay a visit to England in order to have the opportunity of laying the claims of his father personally before members of the Cabinet. To any one with discernment, the existing regime in the Hedjaz could not last much longer, and it was obvious that,

The Sultan Withdraws Recognition

sooner or later, Hussein would have to go. In such an eventuality would the British Government consider and support the candidature of the Shereef Ali Haider to the throne of Mecca? But Abdul Mejid had another mission as well. Like his father he was convinced that the Turks and British were natural friends, and he desired to use what influence he could to bring about a real reconciliation between the two countries. During his stay in England Abdul Mejid had an interview with Winston Churchill, who was then Colonial Secretary, and also spoke to many influential experts in the Foreign Office. But whenever he approached the subject of his father's claims he would receive evasive replies, and was informed by Mr. Lindsay, on behalf of Lord Curzon, that the engagements of H.M. Government with King Hussein prevented their consideration of the Shereef Ali Haider. Certain vague promises which meant nothing were, however, committed to paper, and with these Abdul Mejid had to rest content.

On his way back to Stamboul Abdul Mejid took the opportunity to spend a few days in Paris in order to sound the French Government on the regime they intended to adopt in Syria. Here again he was disappointed to learn that there was little possibility of an Emir ever being appointed, but he was assured that the claims of his father would be considered if occasion should so arise.

9th January 1922. My son, Abdul Mejid, returned from his visit to England and France. He tells me that the British Government has made up its mind that one of Hussein's sons shall succeed him when he goes, and that there is no hope of my claim ever being recognized. The hands of the British were tied to the family of Hussein, and I quite expected this result. So far as the French are concerned, opinion is divided. Some desire an Emir to be appointed in Syria, and others think it better for the government of the country to be carried on as at present. If, however, they do eventually decide on an Emirate, I will be considered for the post. We can only wait and see what is going to happen. The British intend to protect Hussein, and both he and Feisal are going to cause them endless trouble. Perhaps, one day, I may get justice. I have done my best for Islam and for the Ottoman Empire. I can do no more than leave everything in the hands of God.

A Prince of Arabia

Two months later, the Emir writes:

Rumour says that Shereef Hussein is going to abdicate, because many of his alleged supporters have deserted him and fled to Aden. I doubt, however, if this is true. He is said to have received at one time £200,000 a month from the British Government; then it was reduced to £25,000, and finally it ceased.*

With all the trouble, anxiety and humiliation he had to endure, the health of the Shereef began to be seriously impaired, and the sickness which was to cause him much suffering and end in his death thirteen years later now took hold of him. Whereas, in the old days, his home was the happy resort of all sorts and conditions of men who valued his counsel and advice, now he felt himself deserted by many of his former friends. Sympathy with his position was conspicuous by its absence, and those to whom he had shown loyalty and friendship now disregarded even his very existence. The future was uncertain; he saw no hope in any direction, and he became the victim of depression. Yet, in all his trouble, he maintained his faith until the end. From time to time he would receive visits from members of the French embassy, and his friendship with Admiral de Robeck continued. The former told him that General Gouraud in Syria was still working for conditions that would be favourable for the appointment of an Emir, but the Shereef was far from sanguine. "If the French want me," he said, "I will work for my people; but, if they do not call, what is there that I can do?"

A few months later the Shereef records a personal visit he received from Izzet Abid Pasha, whose son became President of the Syrian Republic. The Pasha stated that the French would either elect a President or a King of Syria, and added that, if they decided on the second alternative, Ali Haider would most certainly be nominated. "You can then save the country," he concluded. The Shereef thanked him and said that the last thing he wished was to become a curse to the country. If, however, it was the general wish of the people

* In the Parliamentary news reported in *The Times* of the 1st March 1922, these payments were confirmed by the Earl of Crawford in reply to Lord Raglan. He added that they ceased at the end of February 1920.

The Sultan Withdraws Recognition

that he should be selected, and if they promised to work in unity, then he would do the best he could for them.

Other visitors suggested to the Shereef that he should organize a party for propaganda purposes on his behalf in Syria, but this he refused to do, thinking that his prestige and position as head representative of the Shereefian family was quite sufficient.

The association of the Shereef with the Crown Prince, Abdul Mejid, remained as sincere as ever, and many are the visits recorded which they paid to each other. The daughter of the Crown Prince, now wife of the eldest son of the Nizam of Haiderabad, often came over to Chumlijah to play in the grounds with the young daughters of the Shereef, while the two older men discussed the political situation and the many interests they had in common. The activities of the Shereef, however, were considerably curtailed by his failing health; he could no longer ride and was only able to take short walks in his garden, in the cultivation of which he always took a keen interest. He was even unable to attend many of the ceremonies associated with the season of Ramadan, but possibly political, as well as physical, considerations deterred him from doing so.

In addition to his other misfortunes, the income of the Shereef became less and less, and he records his distress on hearing the news that the money he had in German banks was worthless. It was a great sorrow to him that he could no longer help those who were in want.

From Mecca the news regarding the state of affairs in the Hedjaz and the general condition of the people grew worse. Dissatisfaction with the self-styled King of the Hedjaz was rampant, and there were few prepared to continue their support of Hussein. So great was the hatred in some quarters towards him, and so great was his own stupidity and conceited folly, that it was obvious that his reign would shortly have to end. Without the support of Great Britain, Hussein would have fallen—overthrown by his own countrymen—immediately the first World War was over; and it was unfortunate that there should have been many people in England who confused the promises given to Hussein with those given to the

A Prince of Arabia

Arabs as a whole. They conflicted, and it was no use to pretend otherwise. It would have been hard to find a responsible Sheikh or Moslem leader of importance to whom the name of Shereef Hussein was not anathema. There were many, however, who desired the Shereef Ali Haider to be reinstated as Emir of Mecca, and Sheikhs from the Hedjaz, particularly those of the Harb tribes, would travel to Stamboul in order to reiterate their loyalty towards the Shereef and implore him to rescue them from the oppression of Hussein.

But Ali Haider would do nothing of the sort without the approval of the British Government to whom he applied for permission to go to Mecca as an ordinary private individual. Such a visit would show to what extent the desire was genuine among the tribes that he should be installed as Emir at such time when it was considered expedient that Hussein should be removed. But to all his applications to proceed abroad from Stamboul, whether to India, Iraq, Egypt or the Hedjaz, he received the same negative reply. To all intents and purposes he was a prisoner in Stamboul, unable to play the part he so desired in the resettlement of the political issues of the Near and Middle East. To a man of his character and ability it must have been galling to watch one mistake follow another, to see misunderstandings fanned into active hostility and yet be powerless to assist. Had the Shereef Ali Haider been allowed to go to Mecca it is quite probable that Ibn Saoud would never have attacked the Hedjaz. This attack was chiefly due to a personal quarrel with Hussein, whose conceited intransigence galvanized the Wahhabi leader to invade the Hedjaz. Towards the Shereef Ali Haider, Ibn Saoud had the greatest respect and they would probably have worked together in harmony. Reference to the final campaign of Ibn Saoud will be deferred to a later chapter.

Meanwhile the Shereef records how on the 2nd August 1922 he received, for the first time, his official appointment as a Senator—a post which he had occupied since 1908 when he was one of the first to be chosen by Sultan Abdul Hamid. Since there was now no Senate worth attending, this official recognition of his position was somewhat ironical.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE ABOLITION OF THE SULTANATE

TOWARDS THE MIDDLE OF AUGUST 1922, the situation in Anatolia began to develop favourably for the Turks who had now reorganized their forces and were in a position to drive back the Greeks who were suffering from lack of support and internal dissension. To every sympathiser with the National Movement this news was a tonic, and the succession of Turkish victories which followed is recorded briefly, but pointedly, in the diary of the Shereef.

17th August 1922. Jemal Bey, son of Ghazi Osman Pasha, has returned from Angora and assures me that the National army has been brought thoroughly up-to-date. A new light shines from the faces of the people who realize that, at last, they are masters of their own country. What they demand they are determined to obtain. May God give them what they want for themselves and for Islam, and may their endeavours be blessed!

6th September. The Anatolian army has captured the Greek Commander and his entourage. Thank God, Mussulmans can rejoice because they have at last achieved something!

9th September. The Crown Prince telephoned, and then sent a messenger to say that Smyrna had fallen. I rejoiced and, towards evening, went to congratulate him in person.

A few days later the Turkish advance reached the shores of the Dardanelles and culminated in the crisis of Chanak, where the cool and tactful diplomacy of General Harington, with only a handful of British troops, prevented a renewal of the war in Europe and enabled all the Allies to escape without utter shame from the consequences of their lamentable and divided policies. The subsequent convention at Mudania brought hostilities between Greeks and Turks to an end, and removed the danger of collision between the Turks and the British. It is not the intention here to go into the details of this agreement or of the events which preceded it, and it will be

A Prince of Arabia

sufficient to quote the words of Sir Valentine Chirol to show the significance of these events to the Mohammedan world:

“The Mudania Convention was more than a mere armistice paving the way for a final peace conference. It closed, however unsatisfactorily, a lamentable chapter in the history of relations between East and West. It wiped out the ill-starred Treaty of Sèvres, and with it almost all the penalties which Turkey had brought upon herself by her entry into the Great War and the atrocious crimes perpetrated by her against her subject races. When she surrendered to the mercy of the Allies at Mudros on the 30th October 1918, the death knell of Turkey seemed to have actually sounded. At Mudania, four years afterwards, she was resuscitated, and resuscitated in a blaze of military glory which, however cheaply earned, could not fail to vindicate in the eyes of the East her claim to be regarded as the triumphal sword of Islam and the spearhead of Asian revolt against the West. It was hailed with enthusiastic demonstrations by Mohammedan Indians in Calcutta as well as by the Turkish population in Constantinople, and it was hailed everywhere, and not without reason, as a blow dealt specially against England, who had played the chief part in the overthrow of Turkey in the Great War and in the drafting of the Sèvres Treaty.”

On the 11th October the Shereef records his delight at the signing of the Mudania convention, the news of which he heard personally from General Emery who paid him a visit. So great was his pleasure and hope for the future that he sent a telegram of congratulations to Moustapha Kemal. He describes the state of excitement in the capital.

19th October. In order to see the excitement and joy of the people I crossed over the Bosphorus to Bechiktash. I never remember seeing Stamboul look so gay nor so beautifully decorated. May God give even greater joy to the followers of Mohammed!

Like many observers in countries other than Turkey, the Shereef Ali Haider had regarded the National army as the ‘Sword of Islam,’ to uphold the threatened integrity of the Caliph, and to be the champion of Mohammedan interests

The Abolition of the Sultanate

throughout the world. Hence his wholehearted support and sympathy with what he thought were the aims of Moustapha Kemal, although he realized there was a certain amount of hostility shown by Anatolia towards the person of the Sultan Vahid-ed-Din. He believed, however, that this hostility would be replaced by a normal relationship. Disillusion was now to dawn.

On the 17th October the Shereef heard that the Sultan had offered Moustapha Kemal the hand of friendship, expressing his sentiments through the agency of the veteran statesman, Tewfik Pasha. A few weeks later he records that the Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, sent a telegram to Angora inviting the National Assembly to co-operate with the Capital. The Shereef, however, had his doubts on the reception of these overtures and on the 2nd November he heard that the reply of the Angora Government consisted in a salute of 101 guns to proclaim that they no longer recognized Vahid-ed-Din as Sultan and had determined on his deposition in favour of another member of the Imperial House. This, in itself, was not to be wondered at, because the Sultan and his Government in Stamboul had been regarded not only as traitors to Turkey but to Islam as well.

In order to save their own skins it was contended, rightly or wrongly, that the Sultan and Damad Ferid had sold Turkey to the Allies, and had sacrificed the interests of their country in order to curry favour, particularly with the British. To a certain extent this accusation was correct and individuals, like the Shereef Ali Haider, had been sacrificed without mercy; but the Sultan had been rendered virtually powerless by the Allied occupation. Very naturally the decision of the Grand National Assembly caused no little flutter in Constantinople, and the Shereef describes the state of affairs which ensued and his own reactions.

3rd November. Every one is excited, and all talk about the proposed change in the Sultanate. Who will they proclaim? What will become of the Sultan Vahid-ed-Din?

5th November. The Government of the People have the situation in hand, but the Sultan is obstinate and many rumours are current in connection with him. The Caliph himself states that they may

A Prince of Arabia

attempt to put Selim Effendi in his place or even the young Wassub Effendi, the great grandson of Sultan Murad. To my mind they can, and will, choose no other than Prince Abdul Mejid. Ever since the days of my childhood, when I first attended the Imperial School, he has been a good and loyal friend.

The Shereef considered that the duty of Sultan Vahid-ed-Din was to remain in Stamboul until such time as it was proved, beyond a shadow of doubt, that the country wished for his deposal. He was therefore disgusted when he heard that the Sultan had deserted his responsibilities and had taken to flight aboard H.M.S. *Malaya*.

17th November. While I was reading in the library a servant came to tell me that the Crown Prince had just phoned to inform me that the Sultan had fled the country on board the *Malaya*. I was both amazed and disgusted at his action. May God preserve us from such a weak-kneed Sultan.

19th November. This morning a man appeared under my bedroom window and announced that Prince Abdul Mejid had been proclaimed Caliph. I was delighted, and took the first opportunity to cross the Bosphorus in order to pay my respects. We embraced and kissed each other, after which he told me all that had occurred. May good to all Moslems come from this appointment!

The Sultan Vahid-ed-Din had felt the precariousness of his position in Stamboul. He realized his unpopularity with the authorities in Angora and remembered the manner in which his brother, Abdul Hamid, had been treated. He feared the wrath of his own people, but he was also suspicious of the British. He was thus faced with two alternatives; to throw himself on the mercy of the British or to retain his position in face of the anatagonism of Angora. Neither alternative was particularly attractive, but he chose the former, and arranged with the British authorities a secret plan to escape. When the people heard that he had fled, they were furious and regarded him, more than ever, as a traitor to the country.

The *Malaya* sailed with the Sultan for Malta, where he took up temporary residence. A few weeks later, Shereef Hussein extended an invitation to Vahid-ed-Din to visit Mecca, and it is alleged that this invitation was prompted by the British. In

The Abolition of the Sultanate

spite of the appointment of Prince Abdul Mejid as Caliph, Vahid-ed-Din maintained that, as he had never resigned, the office of Caliph remained vested in his person. Hussein therefore hoped that the ex-Sultan would surrender the title to him and, for that reason, he welcomed the proposed visit. Vahid-ed-Din, on the other hand, hoped that a visit to the Hedjaz would unite the Arabs together in a spirit of religious enthusiasm and possibly encourage them to act against the Turks. Such a prospect was, of course, extremely unlikely, but he felt that there was a possibility that some concerted action on the part of the Arabs would weaken the power of Moustapha Kemal.

At this time there were many rumours, doubtless inspired, that Shereef Hussein would be recognized as the true Caliph of Islam, and he himself did everything possible to encourage this idea. He did not reckon, however, with the jealousy that the assumption of that title would rouse in other Arab rulers, particularly Ibn Saoud, who were stronger than himself. So he set out to make the visit of the fugitive Sultan as spectacular as possible, in order to impress Vahid-ed-Din with his own strength and to show the people how big and important an office was that of Caliph. All the local Shereefs were summoned in strength to Jeddah, and a large number of Sheikhs and tribesmen were assembled in addition. Thus the reception accorded to the Sultan was on the grandest scale, showing the utmost respect and attention towards his person.

On arrival at Mecca the ex-Sultan was lodged in the official palace of the Devi-Aouns which had been built by Mohammed Ali of Egypt on the first appointment of Mohammed-ibn-Aoun. King Hussein then gave a number of feasts and showed liberal hospitality to his distinguished guest, while his advisers did their best to point out to the entourage of the Sultan the desirability of surrendering to Hussein the title of Caliph. This title, it was contended, had been given by Shereef Bereket to the ancestor of Vahid-ed-Din, Sultan Selim, and its surrender now would merely be the return to the family of Shereefs of what originally belonged to them.

Vahid-ed-Din was as cunning and astute as Hussein, and understood exactly the object of his attentions. It was not in

A Prince of Arabia

accordance with his plans to give the Caliphate to Hussein, and he therefore decided that it would be best to leave the country as soon as possible. In the words of an old Turkish proverb: *Two tight-rope walkers cannot perform on the same rope*. So the Sultan said that the air of Mecca did not agree with him and announced his departure. This intention naturally upset the Arab king who pressed his guest to stay, but the Sultan said that, although he had hoped to remain for the *haj*, the climate did not agree with him and his health was suffering. Hussein then suggested Taif in the mountains—an ideal health resort—and Vahid-ed-Din was not allowed to refuse. So he was escorted with much ceremony to Taif where he remained for about a month. Then the teeth of his young son, Prince Ertogrul, became troublesome; no dentist was available and the Sultan insisted that the time had come for him to depart. He expressed his regret that the question of the Caliphate should have been raised, and lost little time over his return to Jeddah where he waited for the arrival of the next Khedivial boat. His departure was not as impressive as his arrival, and he finally sailed for the south of France where he took up residence at San Remo.

A few years later (1926) Vahid-ed-Din died, and his body was brought to Syria for burial in Damascus. His remains were landed at Beirut on a day of storm, rain, darkness and earthquake, where they were met by Prince Farouk, the son of the Caliph Abdul Mejid. When the ground was opened to receive the coffin in the courtyard of the mosque of Sultan Selim, it immediately filled with water, and no less than three graves had to be dug. All this caused the superstitious to think.

Although the Grand National Assembly had pronounced Prince Abdul Mejid, by 148 out of 162 votes, to be the "most cultured, upright, and noble member of the Imperial House of Othman," and had chosen him to be Caliph in succession to the fugitive ex-Sultan Vahid-ed-Din, yet they denied to him the title of "Padishah" or Sultan. This showed that the minds of many deputies in Angora were evolving towards that Republican form of government which the Ghazi Moustapha Kemal Pasha had formerly decried, when he had declared in

The Abolition of the Sultanate

the original National Pact that the security of the seat of the Caliphate should be protected from any attack. At the investiture of Abdul Mejid on the 24th November, the new Caliph was not allowed to go, like his predecessors had gone, to Eyoub to be girt with the famous sword of Osman, the founder of Turkey—the selfsame damascened weapon which Sultan Mohammed the Conqueror had carried when he rode in triumph through the streets of Constantinople in 1543. The position thus created was admittedly anomalous, and certainly produced much latent discontent in the old Capital.

The conviction had, however, gradually gained strength in Angora that the historical associations of the Caliphate were incompatible with a constitutional government responsible to a National Assembly: the very atmosphere of awe and reverence that surrounded the personage bearing the august name of Khalifah, to whom unquestioning obedience was due, exposed his Ministers to the risk of dismissal at any moment, just as in the preceding reigns of Turkish despots. But what angered the Shereef Ali Haider more than anything else was the fact that all the prayers at the Investiture were read for the first time in Turkish whereas, hitherto, Arabic had been the language used.

26th November 1922. Mr. Crane, an American and an ex-Ambassador to China, paid me a visit. I had never met him before. He asked many questions about the general state of affairs, but I told him to go into Anatolia and see things for himself. We talked of the Syrian question, and he said: "The French want money from America, but we have suggested to them that they turn Syria over to us in compensation for the financial loan they desire." We then spoke of the state of uncertainty throughout the world. "Is there no settled country," he enquired, "where I can live in peace?"

"Yes," said my son Abdul Mejid. "In the Yemen or in Central Africa."

"Europeans," I said, "have stirred up the whole world and are responsible for having carried the storm of warfare into almost every corner. Blood is being spilt in the most unlikely quarters due to their policies and ambitions. Only the country of Yemen has protected herself from the confusion which exists elsewhere."

On more than one occasion Mr. Crane turned the conversation to

A Prince of Arabia

the Emir Feisal, but I took no notice and talked of something else. As he rose to leave he said in Arabic: "*Eklan wa Saklana*," and I replied: "*Ma-Isslamah*."

Eklan wa Saklana—You are one of my people. May your path be made clear.
Ma-Isslamah—With peace and security.

The next blow that the Shereef was to receive was unexpected and infuriated him almost more than anything else. Anatolia now started a campaign of ridicule against all members of the Shereefian family, and deprived them of the official positions that many of them held in Turkey. To the Shereef Ali Haider this was both ungracious and short-sighted and, although he ascribed it to the treachery of Hussein and the distrust it produced, he did not see how the National Assembly had any justification whatsoever for the adoption of this attitude. On the 24th November he writes:

I was annoyed. The comic papers to-day made fun of the Shereefs. Is it right that they should be submitted to such ridicule? I have sacrificed myself to the best interests of this country, and now these people make fun of the descendants of their Prophet. They wonder how it is possible for them still to hold positions of responsibility. What does the Koran say? "O God, give your blessing to Mohammed and his people, and may the curse of God be on those who express dislike for the family of the Prophet." The Prophet spoke truly.

Incensed by the attitude of Angora, members of the Shereefian family living in Turkey appealed to Ali Haider to take action, the more militant urging him to go to Syria or some other Arab State and place himself at the head of a revolutionary party. But Ali Haider remained faithful to his principles.

"I will enter no political society," I replied, "nor stoop to any underhand intrigue: but on the question of your appointments I will certainly speak to the Caliph."

His visitors were not hopeful about the Caliph having sufficient power to interfere, but Ali Haider, believing that Abdul Mejid could still exert some influence over the National Assembly, visited the Palace. The Caliph shared the Emir's indignation and promptly sent a strongly worded letter to

The Abolition of the Sultanate

Angora, pointing out that the sum involved was comparatively small and that to deprive the Shereefs of their appointments was not only in the worst interest of the country, but would also create an unfortunate impression throughout the Moslem world. "If the Moslem world is offended," he wrote, "the effect on Turkey and the Caliphate could only be injurious."

The diary continues:

30th December. An Indian, Abdul Rahman, came to see me and said he had written to the Caliphate Society in India with reference to the persecution from which we were suffering in Turkey. It seems strange that a man I scarcely know should extend so much sympathy for our condition, whereas the nation to whom we have given sustenance for over 300 years should be devoid of any consideration for our welfare and our position.

15th January 1923. The Caliph sent one of his personal A.D.C.s with a present of 1,000 liras to help me in my difficulties. I much appreciated this attention: on the one hand I was pleased, but on the other I was upset as I disliked the idea of being in any one's debt. I wondered what income the Caliph was getting, and for how long he would be receiving what was adequate to meet his many expenses.* I could not refuse him so I wrote a letter of sincere thanks for his generosity.

In spite of all the efforts made by the Caliph on behalf of the Shereefs, it was soon apparent that the decision of Angora was irrevocable. Turkey for the Turks, and only for the Turks, was their cry, and they resolved to move from the country all alien influences whether they were Greek or Armenian, Arab or Jew. The leaders of the new Turkey wished to sever their connections with the different states which were formerly incorporated in the Ottoman Empire, and they wished also to dissociate themselves officially from the religion which had been an intimate part of the life of the country for centuries. Their policy caused much suffering to the different communities involved, and more especially to those, like the Shereef Ali Haider, who had always shown a consistent loyalty towards the preservation of the Caliphate.

20th February 1923. I heard that my cousin, Shereef Zeid, had

* The Shereef need have had no apprehension about the Caliph's income, much of which was independent of Turkish sources. He was being assisted by the Nizam of Haiderabad to the extent of £1,000 a month.

A Prince of Arabia

come to say farewell, as he was being forced to leave the country. I received him and found him depressed. I ought to have assisted him financially, but I felt that under my present circumstances it was quite impossible for me to do so. I nevertheless forgave him all his debts to me, and returned to him the jewellery he had left in my possession as security. This man had been ejected from his adopted country by the Turkish Government which he had served faithfully, and he is now obliged to go to India, away from his family. During my Emirate he went with the representative of Ibn Rashid to visit the tribes on my behalf and, by his zeal and energy, was able to bring a large number of them together. He worked conscientiously in my service and now I can do nothing for him. He has been deprived of his income by the conquerors of Anatolia, and is therefore compelled to join his step-brother in India. How strange it all seems! This very man, Shereef Zeid, supported the forces of Moustapha Kemel in the early stages of their success and, when the Anatolian army captured Smyrna, he was mad with joy. Together we drove in Stamboul to witness the excitement of the people with whose jubilation we were in sympathy. Now his service and loyalty are of no account!

It was a sad winter for the Shereef. The Lausanne Conference, which had opened on the 20th November 1922 appeared as though it would never end with a permanent settlement, and to the anxiety produced by the uncertainty of its outcome was added the determination of the Nationalists to eradicate alien influence from the country. With the constant series of disappointments and anxieties, the health of the Shereef deteriorated, and he records a series of sleepless nights.

Again I could not sleep, so I rose and, having performed my ablutions, I prayed: My God, why hast Thou deprived me of all I hold most dear—the House of God in Holy Mecca, my country, my ability to perform my pilgrimage to the Prophet of God, my tribes, my friends. Why, oh God, this deprivation? If it is a punishment for my sins I beg your forgiveness, and pray that I may be permitted still to be of service. From my Prophet do not separate me: from my ultimate object do not turn me. Help me, oh God! God is great and Mohammed is His Prophet!

More Shereefs were forced to leave the country and peace seemed a long way off.

2nd March. I am waiting anxiously for news of peace. From the

The Abolition of the Sultanate

bottom of my heart I desire peace. I have read the speech delivered by Moustapha Kemal in Angora and, in his words, I could find little hope of a settlement.

4th March. Rumours of peace, but no reality. War has ruined us and men are hungry.

11th March. I saw the Caliph in his palace and he received me as graciously as ever. He told me of a dream he had thirty-five years ago in which he was standing at the foot of a great stair-case, when someone presented him with a standard. "What is this?" he said, as he felt the unaccustomed weight on his shoulder. "The Caliphate," was the answer. He told me that if the weather was fine on the following Friday, he would cross over to Scutari for prayers in the Validé mosque. After an hour together I went to the room of the First Chamberlain where I found many strangers. There was an officer sprawling in a chair with his head uncovered. As I entered he put on his *kalpak*, rose, and without any salutation walked straight out of the room. I imagined he acted thus, either because I was an Arab and a Shereef, or from personal dislike. He might have had urgent duties to perform but, in any case, it showed lack of breeding. It is best to leave everything in the hands of God, but perhaps I have become over sensitive and nervous.

16th March. The Caliph came with traditional ceremony to Scutari for the Friday *Selamlık*, and every one was delighted.

The pomp and ceremony which the Caliph liked to observe when attending his Friday *Selamlıks* probably hastened Angora's decision to abolish the Caliphate. On this occasion he landed on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus from the State *caïque*, a long and slender craft, painted white with gilt carvings and culminating in a richly decorated poop. In an armchair covered in crimson velvet sat the Caliph, alone, in red fez and black frock-coat. Twelve oarsmen in loose white *shalwas*, gold and red embroidered *boleros* and long, loose sleeves, wearing red fezes on their heads, pulled as one man.

The Imperial *caïque* was followed by others, only a little less splendid in appearance.

A large crowd had assembled to greet him. Mounting a richly caparisoned horse he rode slowly along the route followed by the Imperial Princes and his bodyguard in vivid blue and scarlet uniforms, with gay pennants fluttering from their lances.

A Prince of Arabia

On arrival at the mosque the Caliph dismounted and entered with the Shereef Ali Haider, dressed simply in turban and *jibba*, walking with presence and dignity by his side.

This was to be the last ceremony at which the two, in their respective positions, would ever appear together. The last Imperial figure and Caliph, and the last Grand Shereef of Mecca to be appointed by the Turks.

1st May. The fifteenth day of Ramadan when it is customary to perform the annual pilgrimage to the Old Seraglio to reverence the Hirker Sheref. I attended with my sons and, after we had prayed, the Caliph received the Princes of the Imperial Household. Many times and under different Sultans I have attended this ceremony, but never before had I felt greater emotion. I was grieved to observe on this occasion a great lack of that reverent attitude which was always such a marked feature at ceremonies of this nature. Few men now seem to have the attachment to their faith that is so essential, and their attitude amazed me.

Although the treatment which the Turks had accorded to the Shereef Ali Haider made him write bitterly about them in his personal diaries, he gave no further expression to his feelings, and discouraged any talk directed against the Administration.

My son, Abdul Mejid, brought some British officers to see me, and they spoke much against the Turks. However badly I have been treated by them, I do not like to hear things said against these people.

In his conversations the Shereef carried discretion almost to extreme, and very few had access to his innermost thoughts. Newspaper reporters, Indians associated with the Caliphate movement, and visitors of different nationalities pressed him for his views on questions of the moment, but he preserved the utmost reticence.

On the 24th July 1923, after months of diplomatic bargaining, the Treaty of Lausanne was signed—the peace to which the Shereef had looked forward with such anxious longing; the peace which he had hoped would establish the unity of Islam and enable him to take the part he craved in the settlement of his own countries in the Near East. For the past few months, however, the Shereef had realized the determination

The Abolition of the Sultanate

of the National Assembly to sever all connection or interest in the former Arab dependencies of the Turkish Empire, and he knew that the peace, when it came, would deal only with the national aspirations of a purely Turkish State. Hence he records the signing of the Treaty with the laconic words: "Peace at last"—making no comment on its provisions which held only a negative interest for him.

The Great Powers who had been so ready to dictate terms, not only of peace but of national destruction, to the Turks at the time of the Sèvres Treaty had now found themselves obliged to negotiate on far less than even terms. A victorious Turk was now re-established in Constantinople, every form of foreign control and guidance was swept away, and the capitulations which, for many hundreds of years, had protected the subjects of Western nations in Turkey against injustice were abolished. The control of the fateful Straits reverted to the Turks under the thinnest disguise, and the Powers had to lend themselves to a scheme by which the many thousands of Greeks, who had lived on Turkish soil for generations, were forcibly transported, under conditions of incredible suffering, to their own country. Infused with a newborn sense of nationality the Turk was only too willing to abandon the former Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire to the various mandatory Powers, the fate of Mosul being remitted to the decision of the League of Nations. It was this more than anything that brought to the Shereef Ali Haider the feeling of desertion—the utter loneliness of an unwanted stranger in a foreign land. His object now was to move as soon as possible to a more congenial country.



1923-1926

The Abolition of the Caliphate

The Wahhabi Conquest of the Hedjaz

Ali Haider is proposed for the Emirate of Mecca

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE CALIPH LEAVES TURKEY

A NUMBER OF PROMINENT ARABS belonging to the Shereefian family, who had been forced to leave Turkey, had gone to India where they had found a sympathetic welcome among the Mohammedan communities. Indian Princes of Moslem States had shown much consideration towards their more unfortunate co-religionists from other countries, and Ali Haider now sought permission from the British Government to be allowed to proceed to India himself. To his surprise and disappointment this reasonable request was refused. Had it been granted his influence and position would doubtless have lessened the troubles associated with the Caliphate movement in India which caused the Government both concern and expense, and he would have been welcomed by Moslem Princes who would gladly have helped the head representative of the line of their Prophet. Indian Princes would not, however, help any Moslem potentate without the prior approval of the British Government. King George V had asked the Nizam of Haiderabad to assist the Imperial Family of Turkey, which he did with the greatest liberality. No such request was made for Ali Haider who was even forbidden to proceed to India. Later, the Shereef writes to Fez, but again he is disappointed.

I wrote to Fez to enquire if it is possible for me to settle there. This Government is the cause of my doing the most unlikely things.

As the winter of 1923-4 approached, the Shereef applied to go to Egypt with the same result.

The British will not give me permission to reside in Egypt. To satisfy the ambitions of Shereef Hussein my interests, however humble, are continually sacrificed. In the Turkish Government there is no one who will lift a finger to help me, and I am apprehensive as to what the future will hold.

Wistfully the Shereef says good-bye to his friends who are free to travel as they desire.

A Prince of Arabia

I went to say farewell to Mahmoud Mouktah Pasha who is leaving to spend the winter in Egypt. "Don't you also want to travel?" he enquired. "Why are you staying here?" I replied that I naturally wanted to get away, that I wanted most particularly to go to India but that the British would not give me the necessary permission. I wanted also to go to Egypt for the winter as I could not stand the cold of Stamboul, but the Egyptian Government would not give me permission to land. "To be denied access to Egypt," I said, "is perfectly ridiculous. I asked permission through Marshal Allenby but, because he is a friend of Shereef Hussein, he would not grant it. I suppose he fears that I would go to the Hedjaz and create trouble." Mahmoud Mouktah promised to see King Fuad, himself, on my behalf, and I thanked him.

But the months pass and no permit is given to the Shereef to allow him to enter any of the countries he desires to visit.

I can neither get permission to go to my own country, nor to visit other countries where the climate would be more beneficial to my health. The Turks suspect me of British sympathies, and the British accuse me of being pro-Turk. Between the two I am finished. If only I could get away!

With the Treaty of Lausanne, changes of a far reaching character took place in Turkey, and of these perhaps the most remarkable was the rapid emancipation of women, who now took a prominent part in the life of the country. The old local colour gave way to the western drab, and picturesque head-dresses were replaced by European hats irrespective of whether they fitted the wearer or not. It was natural that these outward changes should not appeal to the Shereef. He describes a trip up the Bosphorus in one of the ferry steamers.

I went with my son, Mohiddin, for a steamer trip to the Black Sea entrance of the Bosphorus. I shall not go again as the boats were crowded, and the women, calling it fashionable, were dressed most unpleasantly. The bodies of the women completely spoilt the beauty of the Bosphorus and turned that beauty, for me, into the dinginess of a prison. It depressed me to see such a vulgar crowd!

In spite of all his troubles and anxieties, the Shereef Ali Haider made the most of what enjoyments life still held for him. He was keen on art in all its aspects, and spent many

The Caliph leaves Turkey

an evening listening to singing and music which always cheered his soul. His sons, especially Mohiddin, were most accomplished musicians, and he received frequent visits from a well-known Russian painter, Feldman. Once, while painting his host and engrossed in the act of bringing out the details of the sitter's hand, Professor Feldman was surprised to see the Emir rise, leave the room and return with a book in Arabic, from which he read with pride an observation that a man's hand was a true index to his character.

Added to his other anxieties, the financial position of the Shereef grew steadily worse, and his only source of income was a modest sum from the Wakf in Mecca. Because of his straitened circumstances he found it necessary to dismiss many of his servants, several of whom had been in his service for over thirty years; he had to sell his motor cars and horses and live in a frugal style. Many relations in even poorer circumstances made constant demands upon his purse, and even members of his entourage during the war sent him calls for financial assistance. He always gave whatever help he could.

Ali Haider was never an opportunist. He had a strict creed and he kept to it. He constantly showed his dislike of political intrigue, and no suggestion that he should associate himself with any party ever found response in his heart. He records the visit of a deputation of *Ulema* from Morocco.

A deputation of *Ulema* from Morocco came to visit me, and their leader wished me to form a society for the preservation of the unity of Islam. He had travelled widely, met and talked with prominent Turkish leaders, and his proposal was that every free Moslem country should provide three delegates for this society, which should be under the patronage of the Caliph. Ismet Pasha had dismissed the proposal by saying: "We do not wish the Caliph to be mixed up in politics, and the society you propose is bound to be more political than religious."

I said: "Instead of a society, let Moslems of all nationalities come more in contact with one another. There is no better meeting place for this purpose than Mecca or Medina." We continued our discussion for five hours, but I would not agree to any of their proposals.

On the 2nd October 1923, the last remnants of the Allied

A Prince of Arabia

troops, which had composed the army of occupation, left Stamboul. The Shereef describes the brief ceremonies associated with their departure and the way in which, prior to embarkation, they were assembled opposite Dolma Bagtche and exchanged salutes with the representatives of the Turkish forces. He watched the transports sail into the Sea of Marmora, but refrained from making any comment in his diary.

With the evacuation of Constantinople there came to an end an occupation which, if in some respects it had not been very glorious, had at least been a model of quiet efficiency, coupled with marked consideration for the feelings and prejudices of the native inhabitants. The actual evacuation was carried out without a hitch, and without that loss of face which at one time appeared inevitable. To General Harington fell the greatest responsibility for upholding the prestige of his country throughout this very trying period and, from friend and foe alike, he received unstinted praise and admiration.

On the 30th October, Moustapha Kemal was proclaimed the first President of the Turkish Republic. The Shereef continues:

Every one is excited! I quite see that a Republic is more suitable under the changed conditions, provided that everything is placed on a sound footing. A Republic should give a better form of government to the people and enable them to progress. The Caliph, however, should be retained as the spiritual head of all Moslems and his office respected; but I foresee that the trend of opinion in the government will lead to the abolition of the Caliphate with the consequent disintegration of Mussulmans. This, to my mind, is bad; but the Turkish Imperial family are largely to blame.

Towards the new administration, Ali Haider adopted a correct attitude, and exchanged calls with Rafet Pasha, the Angora representative, prior to the declaration of the Republic. His jealous cousins, however, sons of his late uncle, Shereef Ahmed, did what they could to make mischief about him with the authorities.

As the Shereef Ali Haider had foreseen, the breach between the new National Government and the Caliph grew wider.

The Caliph leaves Turkey

With the development of the Turkish Republic (which brought the world face to face with a Turkey where, for the first time in over four hundred years, there was, instead of a single ruler uniting in his hands the secular and religious authority, a Caliph in Constantinople who could not draw the sword of the Conqueror, and an elected President of the Republic in Angora) there began an ominous press campaign against the Caliph and the whole of the Imperial Family. Since the Caliph was admittedly in fact what he had been pronounced to be—the most distinguished member of the Imperial Family—and since he had always shown himself to be a gentleman of great tact and common sense, which endeared him to the public of Constantinople, the cry was raised that he was aiming at the restoration of the Sultanate. On the other hand, remaining members of the family were insulted as being licentious good-for-nothings, who had never done anything but hang about bars, frequent balls given by the Allies, and generally squander the money foolishly given them by the State.

On the 28th February 1924, the Shereef records the first news about the abolition of the Caliphate:

The evening papers state that Angora intends to abolish the Caliphate as soon as possible. How unfortunate this is for the Caliph Abdul Mejid! This evening he sent me a signed photograph of himself which had lately been taken.

On the next day the Princess Fatma, wife of the Shereef Ali Haider, records in her own diary some interesting reflections on the situation:

The papers are full of the destruction of the Caliphate, which was really decided upon some weeks ago when Moustapha Kemal paid his visit to Smyrna. Perhaps the present Caliph had made too much of a show of majesty during his Friday *Selamlık*, which interested the people and caused large numbers of tourists to gather. One Turkish woman said to me to-day: "Of what use was the Caliphate to us during the War? We proclaimed a holy war and what good did that do?"

So-called help from Mohammedan countries means interference in the domestic concerns of the new government. The authorities hold

A Prince of Arabia

that the old customs associated with the Caliphate stultify their actions, interfere with the freedom of women to act and live naturally, and generally retard the development of the country. The Sultans have had enormous families, endless concubines and illegitimate children, all of whom have had to be considered; and then they have always held exalted ideas of their own importance. In the *harem* the children were in the hands of slaves and old women with no education so, when the young princes grew up, they found their pleasures in bars and dancing salons.

The Caliph sent his portrait to Haider yesterday who is full of sympathy for him. Haider feels his world emptying with the disappearance of the Caliphate, but he freely acknowledges that the Turks are unwilling and unfit to uphold it. He cannot visualize any one able to protect this institution at the moment, and regrets the fact that there will now be no focal point for Islam. From his knowledge of history, however, he believes that, as it has fallen before, so it will rise again.

Abdul Mejid has tried to make himself both a Caliph and a Sultan, and he has not properly associated himself with the National Party—neither has he tried to adapt himself to the changed conditions. If he had adopted the simple life of the Caliphs of old, he might have saved himself and his position. The Princes are also to leave the country but, at the moment, it looks as though the Princesses will be permitted to remain. The Prophet's Mantle and Standard should be returned to Mecca. Had not that intriguing Sultan, Vahid-ed-Din, and his Grand Vizier, Damad Ferid, deprived him of the Emirate they should be returned to Haider, because his ancestor, Shereef Bereket, had originally delivered them to Sultan Selim for safe keeping.

I wonder how Indian Moslems will react to the change! If the Turks do not allow Bolshevik ideas to get a hold upon the country, I am certain they have a great future before them. Moustapha Kemal has the brains and personality to lead the country. He will succeed so long as he does not aim at sovereignty. Had Enver lived he would have been a powerful rival. As it is, the struggle may yet be between Kemal and Ismet.

On Friday, the 29th February 1924, what was to be the last Friday *Selamlık* took place at the mosque of Dolma Bagtche. For hundreds of years this picturesque ceremony had been scrupulously observed by successive Sultans; it had been intimately associated with the very life of the capital and was regarded, even by foreigners, as an inseparable part of its existence.

The Caliph leaves Turkey

Abdul Mejid had been accustomed to attend this function in different mosques—some a considerable distance away from his Palace—but, on this particular occasion, he considered it to be more discreet for his ceremonial drive to be as short as possible. The route was but thinly lined with interested spectators, many of whom must have realized they were witnessing a scene which would probably never occur again. In a carriage, drawn by four magnificent horses and preceded by his mounted guard, sat the Caliph by himself. His thoughts were reflected in his sad expression, and the crowd respected them. Behind, followed four Chamberlains and a few persons on horseback leading three carriages containing other occupants of the Palace. With what emotion the Caliph must have heard for the last time the cry, “Long live the Caliph,” as he entered the mosque, and how true the admonition of the *Imam* must have sounded: “Humble thyself, and remember that Allah is greater than thou!” He was humbled indeed by the thought of exile. Even as he led the faithful in prayer, a *fetva* authorizing the abolition of the Caliphate was being drawn up, and the Press was complaining:

“The Princes and sons of the Sultan have not rendered the least service to their country. Why then should we to-day grant them allowances from the impoverished treasury of the nation? All the money spent on the upkeep of carriages etc. for the use of the Princes making their excursions, as in the days of absolute sovereignty, is uselessly spent.”

On the following day, the Caliph received nobody and calmly awaited the decision of the Grand National Assembly to whom he intended to submit. It was reported that the Caliphah *Harem* had been deeply affected by the prospect of what lay ahead, and were depressed at receiving no visits because the Palace had been kept under close guard for the past two or three days.

“It is said,” wrote the paper *Aksham*, “that for the past three days, with the exception of the eunuchs, no visitor has entered the *harem* at Dolma Bagtche, but the Caliph himself spends the greater part of his time there. The seven eunuchs in the service of the Caliph appear very much depressed. The Chief Eunuch has eaten nothing for three days and has never raised his eyes to look beyond

A Prince of Arabia

his own room. The other eunuchs, to the number of 300, who are associated with the administration of the Ferié Palace, appear to be calm."

On the 2nd March, the Shereef writes :

The papers announce that all the Princesses must leave the country as well. The wife of my son, Abdul Mejid, through no fault of her own must leave her fatherland with her husband because she is the granddaughter of Sultan Murad. They both came to see me, but they trust in God and say : " This is our destiny."

By a curious coincidence the news of the momentous decision of Angora to abolish the Caliphate reached Constantinople during the evening of the day on which is celebrated the journey of the Prophet to the Seventh Heaven, and the mosques, lit up with fairy lights, twinkled ironically over a city which, for nearly five centuries, had been the capital of a great Empire, and which was now to house for only a few more hours the last of those spiritual chieftains who had been the *Shadow of Allah*.

The decision of Angora was communicated officially to the Caliph Abdul Mejid on the evening of Monday the 3rd March, and it is said that after listening with resignation to this communication, he declared that he considered it his duty to submit to the decision of the nation. He was thereupon informed that he should prepare for his departure immediately. The unfortunate Caliph begged to be allowed at least two days to make the necessary preparations, but he was notified that the instructions received from Angora were categorical, and that he must be beyond the national frontier by the morning. The ex-Caliph then asked if some of his relatives could accompany him, and it was arranged that his wife, Prince Farouk Effendi his son, and Dhashivar Sultana his daughter, should be allowed to do so.

No time was lost in packing into motor lorries the personal belongings of the Imperial Family and, in the early morning about 5 o'clock, Abdul Mejid Effendi and his son took their places in a saloon car. The ladies of the Caliph—accompanied by attendants and two eunuchs—occupied a second motor car which was followed by one containing the Chief of

The Caliph leaves Turkey

Police. Motor lorries and police on motor cycles formed the rear of this pathetic procession. In this way Abdul Mejid Effendi was taken to a point outside the city and expelled beyond the frontiers. At the frontier the eyes of the ex-Caliph were wet with tears as he bade farewell to the Chief of Police, whom he thanked for the consideration and attention which had been shown towards him. His final remark was an expression of hope that this action of the Grand National Assembly should prove of lasting benefit to the Turkish nation.

The abolition of the Caliphate much affected the Shereef Ali Haider whose greatest interest had always been the welfare of Islam. He naturally had a deep, personal interest in this question. His ancestor, Shereef Bereket, had delivered to Sultan Selim the symbols of power, and Ali Haider himself possessed the sword of Selim I, which that Sultan had given to the Grand Shereef as a sign that the protection of Turkey would always be at the disposal of Mecca and her Emirs.

In his diary of the 4th March, the Shereef records the events that were taking place:

A very sad day for all. Last night the Caliph was taken from his Palace and forced to leave the country. The sons-in-law must also go. My son came to say good-bye. He did not wish to show his grief, but I could see that he was deeply moved. They intend to go first to Europe, and I hope that he will in time prepare the ground for me to reside in a country of my desire. I gave him a Koran as a parting gift and wrote him a talisman.

In her diary of the same date, the Princess Fatma writes:

The newspapers are associating Haider with the Caliph Abdul Mejid. It is an excuse for them to mix Haider with their intrigues. The Caliph has asked for subsistence for himself and his family, and the Government has voted the sum of 200,000 liras. This, I imagine, will be cut down as soon as they have left the country. I went to Guez Tepé and saw officials calling at the house of Adilet Sultan, a poor young widow, with her little daughter who knows nothing of life. She is one of the grandchildren of Sultan Murad and was shut up in the Palace prison until her grandfather died. I met several of the Imperial family, all of whom have to leave. They talk of Paris and Nice and do not even know, most of them, where the places are or how they are going to get there. None of the Princes have

A Prince of Arabia

sufficient ability to earn their own living. They all have a taste for music, but their knowledge of that subject is only superficial.

Thus the National Assembly dethroned His Majesty, virtually swept away the historic institution of the Caliphate and drove into exile for ever all the members of a dynasty which had once carried Turkish arms through the sands of Mesopotamia, Syria, Arabia and Egypt, and had planted the Crescent before the very walls of Vienna.

To abolish the Caliphate was a courageous act on the part of the authorities in Angora, as it threw down a challenge to the Moslem world, a large part of whom had been taught to regard this institution as a vital political necessity. For some years past it had been used as a weapon by a large section of Indian opinion with which to threaten the British Government. To such people the action of the National Assembly came as a considerable shock.

The Agha Khan had combined with Ameer Ali in writing a joint letter of protest to Ismet Pasha, the Prime Minister. They pointed out in cogent terms that, in their belief, any diminution in the prestige of the Caliph, or the elimination of the Caliphate as a religious factor would mean the disintegration of Islam and its practical disappearance as a moral factor in the world. The Caliph-Imam, they said, symbolized the unity of the Sunni communion: and the fact that he was descended from the founder of the Turkish nation gave to Turkey a position pre-eminent in Islam.

If Islam was to maintain its place in the world as a moral force, the letter continued, the Caliph's position and dignity should not, in any event, be less than that of the Pontiff of the Church of Rome. Finally, they urged upon the Grand National Assembly the necessity of maintaining the religious and moral solidarity of Islam by placing the Caliphate on a basis which would command the confidence and esteem of the Moslem world.

The effect of this letter was quite opposite to that intended, and the unfortunate circumstances which caused its publication in the Constantinople Press before it had been received by its addressee, raised a storm of fury at Angora, where it was



Her Highness, the Princess Fatma, 1935

The Caliph leaves Turkey

thought that the whole affair was not only an unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of Turkey, but indicated that the Caliph's partisans in Constantinople were in touch with the enemies of the Republic.

It had, of course, been realized for some time past that the reforms so urgently needed could not be carried out until the Republic had been completely secularized, but the case put up for the abolition of the Caliphate at this particular moment, shorn as it was of all its former temporal glory, did not carry much conviction. For long there had been a constant series of petty acts and utterances designed to slight the Caliph, but there were few who thought that rancour would go so far as to turn out of his home in the middle of the night an elderly gentleman, who had never shown himself anything but a good patriot, and who had only accepted the post of Caliph out of deference to the formally expressed desire of his countrymen.

It was natural that the action of the National Assembly should give rise to much speculation in different parts of the world as to the future of the Caliphate, and whether that office would be revived again in the person of some other Moslem potentate. Quickest to take advantage of the situation was Hussein of the Hedjaz, who had for long desired recognition as Caliph. He had many times announced his intention to work for the unity of all Arabs. His influence had been specially active in Palestine, but these very aspirations for the Caliphate were to defeat his ambitions by rousing jealousy in the breasts of other and more powerful leaders in Arabia. On this matter Ali Haider wrote:

The papers say that Hussein is working for the unity of all Arabs. If that is true, I am pleased, but he must not think of acquiring the Caliphate if he wishes to achieve that aim. First, he must work for unity of outlook among the leaders; then, the tribes should be settled and universities founded. The people must be persuaded more and more to develop their arts; trade must be expanded and petty jealousies discouraged. The army of Syria and Iraq should be placed under one command. Men of understanding should be sent to Europe and America: they should not go for pleasure but to cultivate good manners and the knowledge of how to behave in society.

Hussein, nevertheless, arrogated to himself the title of

A Prince of Arabia

Commander of the Faithful and had himself proclaimed Caliph both in the Hedjaz and in Iraq. This action so infuriated the Wahhabi leader, Ibn Saoud, that it sealed, as will presently be seen, the downfall of Hussein.

CHAPTER TWENTY

IBN SAUD AND THE HEDJAZ

STAMBOUL HAD NOW FEW ATTRACTIONS FOR Arabs, and the Shereef, who was still unable to find a country where he could settle, was to receive another blow from the decision of his second son, Mohiddin, to leave for the U.S.A. This gifted and talented Shereef was a musician of no mean order; he had met many distinguished Americans who were interested in his art, and he rightly decided to try and make a name for himself in the States.

Mohiddin came into my study and informed me that he wished to leave for America. How strange it is that the more I pray that we may be kept together, the more do we seem to separate. I realize, however, that his decision is only common sense. What can he do here? We no longer have any value in this country, nor is there any respect for the House of the Prophet.

As the day approaches for Mohiddin's departure the Shereef continues:

I grieve over the forthcoming departure of Mohiddin, but I do not show it. There must be some good purpose behind it all and, since God has directed this change, may it be blessed. May God keep him! He is great and merciful! Before long, please God, may we meet again on Arab land and in happier conditions. Then our present sufferings will be forgotten. I wandered in the garden and talked with God.

Meanwhile Ali Haider's eldest son, the Shereef Abdul Mejid, who had taken up a temporary residence at Nice, had made an application to settle in Egypt. But for one reason or another the Egyptian Government was loath to give refuge to any member of the Turkish Imperial Family, and the request of Abdul Mejid was refused. Finally he decided to proceed to Syria, but his father warned him that the politics of that country were in such a chaotic state that it would be advisable for him not to get mixed up with them and, instead, to devote himself to the study of agriculture.

A Prince of Arabia

The financial position of Ali Haider in Stamboul grew worse day by day, and his chances of obtaining help grew more remote as his friends either deserted him or encountered adverse circumstances themselves. On the 5th June 1924, he records the visit of an Indian from Haiderabad who stated that if Great Britain were to ask the Nizam he would certainly recognize the need of Ali Haider. The Turkish Imperial Family had received help from the Nizam as the result of a personal letter from King George, and he saw no reason why the Shereef should not be treated likewise. He emphasized, however, that he could expect no help from any Indian Prince unless such a request were made.

In the early autumn of 1924 events of importance that had a profound effect on the whole Moslem world began to occur in the Hedjaz. Differences which had existed between King Hussein and Ibn Saoud, the Wahhabi Emir of Nejd, now assumed proportions which could no longer be reconciled by amicable discussions. The assumption by Hussein of the title of Caliph had not only infuriated Ibn Saoud, but had also caused him to suspect that the Grand Shereef was bent on extending Hashimite jurisdiction to include some of the territories administered by himself. Certain localities had been in dispute between the Nejd and the Hedjaz for years and, as far back as 1920, a proposal had been made that the two rulers should meet and discuss their differences amicably. Ibn Saoud was always ready to meet the King of the Hedjaz half-way, but Hussein refused then, and repeated the refusal in 1925 to attend the conference held in Koweit in connection with Arab boundary questions, or even to send a delegate to represent him. In face of this contemptuous attitude it was not surprising that the Wahhabi Sultan should wish to take the law into his own hands. The British Government had done its best to mediate between the two, but Hussein had consistently refused to fall in with any proposals suggested. As a result, Great Britain stood aloof and preserved strict neutrality over the military operations which now began, and her non-interference was entirely in accordance with the principles of justice and fair play.

In September 1924, the Wahhabis invaded the Hedjaz,

Ibn Saoud and the Hedjaz

attacked and captured Taif—the mountain stronghold of Hussein. They then advanced on Mecca. The force at the disposal of the Emir Ali, King Hussein's eldest son, was much inferior to the Wahhabis. Furthermore, the Emir Ali lacked ammunition as, although 20,000 mauser rifles were brought down from Medina where they had been taken from the Turks, there were no cartridges for them, while the artillery was short of shells and his aeroplanes lacked bombs. In such circumstances Mecca was soon in great peril, and a hasty evacuation of the population commenced. Unofficial sources reported that the people were fleeing on foot from Mecca which was in a condition bordering on despair. All the shops closed: King Hussein with his officials removed their families to Jeddah where there was a state of lively apprehension.

Because of the puritanical creed of the fanatical Wahhabis, the events taking place produced reactions throughout the Moslem world, and an appeal was made to the Shereef Ali Haider urging him to intervene.

19th September 1924. Djemal Mollah, who is very well informed, suggests that, through my son, Abdul Mejid, who is now in Syria, I should issue an appeal to all Moslems. If I thought it would achieve anything I would not hesitate to do so, but I cannot see how such action would be of benefit. There would be no result, and where there is no result only harm could ensue. If there was some Government or Power at my back it would be different, but there is no one strong enough who would support me. I thanked Djemal Mollah for his encouragement, as I knew he was prompted by consideration and love for the family of the Prophet.

The discretion shown by the Shereef at this time was prompted by the belief that the object of Ibn Saoud was merely to dethrone Hussein from the Hedjaz, and then retire to his own country when a more reasonable and friendly ruler had been installed in Mecca. Ali Haider, therefore, did not wish to take any action which might antagonize Ibn Saoud, knowing full well that he lacked sufficient money—and therefore power—to make any action on his part effective.

The successes achieved by the Wahhabis were more rapid than many had expected and Hussein, unable to trust even the

A Prince of Arabia

loyalty of his own men, no longer supported by the British Government, who had left him to his fate because of his haughty intransigence, and faced with starvation, decided that no alternative was left to him but to abdicate. This he did on the 6th October in favour of his eldest son, the Emir Ali. He then fled to Jeddah and embarked in a British warship which took him to Akaba, a small but important village at the bottom of the Jordan valley, the nationality of which was a bone of contention between the Emir of Transjordan and Ibn Saoud for years to come.

When he was landed at Akaba, Hussein not only started intrigue among the tribes in that neighbourhood, but also dispatched a mission to Moscow under the Emir Habib Lutfullah in order to try and enlist Soviet help to re-establish himself in the Hedjaz. These activities became such a source of embarrassment to the British Government that his removal to a place where he could make less mischief was considered imperative. He was eventually taken to Cyprus in H.M.S. *Delhi*, where he remained until his death about six years later.

Meanwhile, King Ali gathered together the remnants of his demoralized forces and endeavoured to stem the Wahhabi advance, but his efforts were fruitless and, on the 13th October, Mecca surrendered to these victorious warriors who thus recovered dominion over the Holy City which they had lost to the Egyptians in 1818. The Wahhabi Sultan shut up King Ali in Jeddah, but did not press the siege of that town, alleging that he was unwilling to expose his Puritans to the contamination likely to be incurred by conquering so iniquitous a city.

Extracts from the diary of the Shereef Ali Haider during this period are of interest.

11th October. I have written and told my son, Abdul Mejid, that I felt convinced a petition to the Caliphate Committee with reference to my own position would do no good and might even antagonize the French authorities.

13th October. A friend, Ali Effendi, wants me to telegraph to the Caliphate Committee and deny their accusation that I am, and always have been, actively in league with the British. How can this be? If I had been a protégé of Great Britain, I would not now be in such distressed circumstances.

Ibn Saoud and the Hedjaz

14th October. The evening papers announce the occupation of Mecca by the Wahhabis, and add that the situation is quiet in the Holy City. Hussein has thrown away the Emirate that has been in the family of the Prophet for a thousand years, and all because of his grasping and obstinate nature. All round him he has made enemies, and this is the result.

Ali Effendi brought me a telegram from the Caliphate Committee who asked me certain questions. My reply was translated into the Urdu language to the effect that I had always served Islam to the best of my ability and intended to do so until the end. I enclosed a copy of the late Caliph's letter commending me to all Moslems, and added that I placed my rights in their hands for protection.

With the abdication of Hussein, speculation, which was by no means confined to the Moslem world, was raised concerning the re-establishment of the Caliphate. Arrangements were made for representatives from every country and province where Moslems dwell to assemble, in order to decide what action Mohammedans should take to meet the unusual situation created by Turkey's abolition of the exalted office of the Commander of the Faithful and the expulsion of its last occupant from Turkish territory. This question agitated the minds of many Moslems, and touched the heart of the whole religio-political system of Islam.

Towards the end of 1924, the *New York Times* published a long article on the future of both the Caliphate and the Emirate of Mecca. With regard to the former, the article stated that Ali Haider's candidature was supported by the Mohammedan races of Asia Minor and Egypt whose Press was devoting considerable space in his praise. He was being referred to as the only man possessing the qualities of spiritual leadership and worldly wisdom necessary to unite the Moslem world. But, while the article was not prepared to consider Ali Haider's elevation to the Caliphate as certain, it contended that there was little doubt that he would be re-elected to the Emirate of Mecca. In fact, it was stated that Ibn Saoud had invited the Shereef to return to the Holy City and become its Emir.

When the Shereef Ali Haider read this article in the *New York Times*, he comments as follows:

A Prince of Arabia

The *New York Times* has written an article about me. It is not bad, but it mentions me as a candidate for the Caliphate. This is an office that has never entered my head to assume; neither have I the least desire to do so. It can only be held by a ruler of outstanding wealth and power—otherwise disaffection will only be caused among the different Moslem communities.

The Shereef merely hoped that the Caliphate Committee and the forthcoming Moslem Congress would assist him to regain his rights in the Hedjaz, for there was certainly a strong foundation in the report that Ibn Saoud had expressed a desire that Ali Haider should return to Mecca as its Emir.

23rd October 1924. At midnight, my brother roused me to say that a telephone call had been received to the effect that Ibn Saoud had proclaimed me Emir of Mecca. In the morning this report was repeated in the papers, but there was no official confirmation. I received many visitors who enquired if the news was true.

25th October. Two newspaper reporters came, took photographs and asked questions about my appointment to the Emirate of Mecca. "I know nothing," I said, "beyond what I have read in the news." More reporters came on the following day and enquired about my relationship with Great Britain. Abdul Rahman, the Indian, wanted a copy of my genealogical tree and a photograph to send to the Caliphate Committee. I received many letters of congratulations and hosts of visitors.

At this time the Press of many countries, particularly that of the Near East, gave currency to the rumours about the statement alleged to have been made by Ibn Saoud that Ali Haider should assume the Emirate of Mecca. In the Syrian paper, *El Muktabes*, of the 16th October 1924, for example, there was a statement to the effect that they had received from reliable authority the information that Ibn Saoud intended to restore the Emirate to the family of Devi-Zeyd and that Ali Haider was the candidate for this post. "As is well known," the paper continued, "Ali Haider is one of the greatest believers in the unity of Islam, and his appointment would be in accordance with the wishes of the great mass of Moslems."

The Times of Great Britain, however, was more cautious, and on the 7th November 1924 reports as follows:

Ibn Saoud and the Hedjaz

"It is now definitely known that the Wahhabi Sultan of Nejd issued a proclamation, dated 16th October, in which he declared that neither King Hussein nor any of his sons would be permitted to rule in the Hedjaz.

"The Shereef Ali Haider Pasha, a distant cousin of King Hussein, who was actually appointed Grand Shereef of Mecca by the Turks on Hussein's revolt, is believed to be a claimant to the throne of Mecca, but it is considered unlikely that Ibn Saoud, who is a politic ruler, will take any decision until he has sounded Moslem, and especially Arab, opinion on the subject of the future of the Hedjaz and the Haramain (the two Holy Cities) and has occupied Medina, without which his triumph is incomplete."

6th December. My cousin, Shereef Cherif Pasha, has written an article protesting against my assumption of the Emirate of Mecca on the grounds that my sympathies are too much with Great Britain. How strange it is that such things should be written about me! My grandfather was accused of Anglophil tendencies, and the leader of the intrigue against him, which resulted in his downfall and death, was Shereef Hussein. The justice of God has visited in this life all those who took part in that intrigue.

7th December. The newspapers announce that Ibn Saoud has appointed his son *Wali* of the Hedjaz and declared me to be Emir of Mecca. I still have no official confirmation of this news and cannot understand it. (I heard later that a certain Damascene had advised Ibn Saoud most strongly not to appoint me as Emir, as it could only have the effect of weakening his power in the Hedjaz.) I was asked by cable from Amman to send my photograph, but I replied that I was unwell.

10th December. My son, Mohammed, has been making enquiries as to the value of my Osmanieh decoration which I wish to sell. He has been told that many of the stones are only imitation and that it is not worth as much as I expected. In everything this country does there is dishonesty. They give me a decoration, and in the giving of it there is robbery.

A few days later the Shereef sells his Osmanieh decoration for £500 (T) and hopes that the Government will hear and feel ashamed.

13th December. Shereef Ali is going to march on Mecca. I regret this unnecessary bloodshed caused by the stupid obstinacy of two people.

16th December. The papers say that Shereef Ali has been defeated and that his army has been completely routed.

A Prince of Arabia

This defeat was complete and Ali retired to his last remaining stronghold of Jeddah where he held out for almost a year. When his father had abdicated he had taken with him into exile the greater part of the Treasury, and lack of finance was therefore added to all the other difficulties with which Ali had to contend. On his assumption to the throne Ali had not arrogated to himself the title of Caliph, and he had hoped thereby to reach an amicable understanding with the Wahhabi Sultan who had objected so strongly to Hussein calling himself Commander of the Faithful. But although the overtures of Ali had been rejected by Ibn Saoud on the 15th October, the Wahhabis did not immediately press the siege of Jeddah. Ibn Saoud sought first to consolidate his position and extend his conquest gradually towards Medina in the north. Thus King Ali was able to maintain his position in the Hedjaz for several months.

21st December. Ibn Saoud causes an announcement to be published that any private property which had been seized during the course of the recent campaign would be returned to its owner. He further extends permission to any one, who wishes, to return to Mecca, and states that, so long as they do not interfere in politics, they will be treated with equal justice.

More reports—apparently substantiated—are received about the appointment of Ali Haider to Mecca.

29th December. The evening papers from Adana allege that I have applied to Ibn Saoud for the throne of the Hedjaz, and that he has stated in reply he intends to leave the question to the decision of Moslems in general. I have never made any application to Ibn Saoud, nor do I know anything official of his intentions. In the *Caliphate Journal*, and other papers from India, there are more untruths to the effect that Ibn Saoud had invited me to Riad.

21st January 1925. Mahmoud Zeki telephoned to say that the English papers were reporting that, at a conference held in Mecca, I had been unanimously elected Emir and Ibn Saoud had accepted this decision. "When I receive the intimation from Ibn Saoud, himself," I replied, "then will I believe it."

25th January. An Egyptian paper states that Ibn Saoud desires me to be both Emir and Caliph, and Ibrahim Bey informs me that the same thing is said in the Lausanne papers. "Is it true?" he

Ibn Saoud and the Hedjaz

asked. I told him that I wanted to return to my country and become Emir of Mecca but, when they associate my name with the Caliphate, I am not pleased. I do not think that, at the present time, it would be to the best interests of my countrymen for an Arab to be Caliph. It would only create jealousy, and would certainly not tend towards the unity I desire to see among Arab States. The question of the Caliphate should be left to the decision of a representative gathering of Moslems belonging to every nationality.

The proposed Caliphate Conference, about which there had been so much talk and speculation, did not take place in Cairo during the early part of 1925 as had been originally planned. So many doubts were expressed and the questions raised were so numerous and important, that the Committee considered the best course was to postpone the Conference for at least another year. This decision was also influenced by the political situation in Egypt, and the disturbed state of the Hedjaz. When it did meet it met in Mecca under the presidency of Ibn Saoud towards the end of 1926.

During the spring and summer months of 1925 reports continued to be spread in the Press of the Near East to the effect that as soon as Ibn Saoud had completed the conquest of the Hedjaz, Ali Haider would proceed to Mecca to assume the Emirate. Writers described him as the rightful claimant to the throne, extolled his virtues and laid stress on the qualifications that the Shereef possessed for a position of responsibility in Arabia. This propaganda carried greater weight because it was known that Ali Haider himself had no hand in it, and that those who expressed their ideas on this subject did so both for a very real belief in the ability of the Shereef and respect for his lineage.

Meanwhile the Shereef did not relax his efforts to be allowed to reside in some more congenial country than Turkey where he was very unhappy. Until he heard personally from Ibn Saoud, and conditions were more settled in Arabia, he considered it would be inadvisable for him to proceed to the Hedjaz. He believed, however, that in spite of the local troubles the French were experiencing in Syria at this time, no objection would be raised to his paying a visit to Beirut. So he prevailed upon his eldest son, Abdul Mejid, who was

A Prince of Arabia

already in Beirut, to get permission from the authorities to allow him to land and reside in that country. Negotiations to this effect were accordingly started.

Life for the Shereef in Stamboul, during this period, was monotonous and quiet. The process of westernizing Turkey was going apace, the old fez had now completely disappeared, and much of the colour had departed from this once colourful city. On the 28th October the wearing of hats had been enforced, and no one dared appear in public in anything but western clothes. Fezzes which did appear were quickly torn off by the very same people who, just two years previous, were tearing off all hats as badges of obnoxious foreigners. The Shereef, therefore, kept himself almost entirely to his own house and grounds. He did not criticize the great changes that had taken place around him, but it was quite natural that, at his age and in his position, he had no wish to discard his Meccan turban for a hat.

Of his four sons, Feisal, the youngest, was conscripted for a short period of military service, Mohiddin was still in the United States where he was making a name for himself as a musician of outstanding merit, and Abdul Mejid, of course, had settled in Beirut. In August, Mohammed Emin had to go to England on business and, while in London, he met King Feisal of Iraq.

Mohammed has seen King Feisal in London. He sent his salaams to me and 'kissed my hands.' He told Mohammed that he hoped one day to have the pleasure of meeting me in Baghdad, and was most friendly in his manner towards him. He invited him to tea and treated him as a brother. When he left, Mohammed kissed his hands, and the King again sent his salaams to me.

The seclusion into which the Shereef Ali Haider had retired was reflected even in his diary during this period. He committed very few of his thoughts to paper, and was more cautious than usual in his expressions of opinion. Early in December, he writes:

I do not write what I think. When I am able to leave this country I will then be more free with my pen. In a country that controls even one's very thoughts I am naturally not free to write as I wish. I may

Ibn Saoud and the Hedjaz

quite easily be misunderstood, and certain persons would doubtless take things to heart when no offence was intended.

Apart from the monotony of the secluded existence that the Shereef led at this time, failing health made life even more unpleasant. For days on end he would take to his bed with bronchitis, and this all added to his depression caused by the uncertainty of the future. Nevertheless, with his faith undimmed, he watched and studied carefully the progress of events, and especially those connected with his own Arabia.

For a year now King Ali had been besieged in Jeddah while the Wahhabi Sultan consolidated his position in the Hedjaz. Early in December 1925, Ibn Saoud captured Medina and then felt himself in a position to make a final assault on Jeddah, thus carrying out his determination to drive the family of Hussein out of the country. Many tribes, once loyal to the Hashimites, had deserted to Ibn Saoud largely because Ali was unable to provide them with supplies since his treasury was bankrupt. So, deserted and powerless, Ali realized that personal safety lay only in abdication and flight.

Accordingly he embarked in a British sloop—H.M.S. *Cornflower*—which conveyed him and his family to Aden, whence he eventually found his way to the Court of his brother, Feisal, in Iraq. King Hussein had taken good care to see that anything of value accompanied him into exile when he had abdicated in 1925, so there was little in the way of treasure for Ali to lay his hands upon. Prior to his embarkation, therefore, he had raided the Post Office and had taken away all the stamps, which were retrieved by a harassed post-master just as the *Cornflower* was getting under way.

On the 19th December Jeddah surrendered, and Ibn Saoud's conquest of the Hedjaz was complete. These events again raised the contentious issue of the Emirate of Mecca and, in this connection, the name of the Shereef Ali Haider once more received publicity. Even a *communiqué* in the *London Times* stated that it was understood Ibn Saoud was willing to agree to one of the prominent Shereefs becoming ruler of Mecca so long as he did not belong to the family of Hussein. Other reports reached the Shereef Ali Haider.

A Prince of Arabia

I received a letter from the Moslem community in Paris to enquire whether I would accept the Emirate of Mecca if it was the wish of Islam. As I said before, I say again : “ Without any hesitation I will do what is asked of me by Islam in general and the Arabs in particular. For their good I always pray and my object is service. If I am asked to do so, I will serve to the best of my ability.”



1926-1935

*Ali Haider's last journey to Arabia
and final disappointment
Last Days in Syria*

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

JOURNEY TO SYRIA

WITH THE DEPARTURE OF KING ALI, peace was restored to the Hedjaz, and Ibn Saoud issued a free pardon to all those who had been in arms against him. Furthermore, he stated, in the same proclamation, that the Hedjaz was free for any one who wished to return, and that those who had been prevented by political considerations and fear of reprisals during the Hashimite regime, were now welcome to the country so long as they undertook not to interfere with the established government.

This news caused great satisfaction to many, including the Shereef Ali Haider who was advised that no possible objection would be raised if he undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Places during the *Haj* of 1926. By this time he was fully reconciled to the fact that the rumours about his appointment to the Emirate of Mecca would never materialize. The persistency of the reports associating his name with this position showed that Ibn Saoud must, at one time, have considered Ali Haider's occupation of the Emirate, but the lack of official confirmation from the Wahhabi Emir convinced the Shereef that Ibn Saoud had now determined to keep the Emirate in his own family. The Shereef accepted this fact with philosophical resignation. After all, it was only another disappointment added to the long series with which he had had to contend throughout his life. He was getting old, his health had suffered and all he really desired was to be able to spend his days in financial comfort with congenial surroundings. If, however, responsibility was thrust upon him he would give of his best in whatever sphere such responsibility placed him.

He, therefore, let it be clearly understood that he had no intention of making his pilgrimage to the Holy Places an excuse for political intrigue. He had a passionate longing to return to his own country, look after his own property and, if possible, settle in the Hedjaz as a peaceful citizen for the

A Prince of Arabia

remainder of his life. Once away he would never return to Turkey, but his future permanent residence was entirely dependent on the outcome of events that might be associated with his journey. He accordingly made arrangements for someone to take care of his *konak* at Chumlijah and for the greater part of his family to follow him when he had found a new home. He intended first to proceed to Beirut with his third son, Mohammed Emin, and his daughter, Sfyneh. He would stay there for a short time with Shereef Abdul Mejid, later travelling with Mohammed to the Hedjaz.

Towards the end of January 1926 Ibn Saoud, contrary to expectations, proclaimed his son as Emir of Mecca. There were many who believed that this appointment was only temporary, but the announcement caused the Shereef Ali Haider to be more definite than ever about his proposed visit having nothing whatever to do with the question of the Emirate. The Turkish authorities raised every difficulty they could over the matter of passports, but a telegram from General Weygand, the French High Commissioner in Syria, to the Embassy in Stamboul made things easier. Passages had been booked in the French ship *Lamartine*, due to sail on the 4th March and, on that day—the first for several months—the Shereef left his house and grounds. "In my position and at my time of life, it would be very difficult for me to wear a hat," writes the Shereef, but, although technically a Turkish subject, he was excused from having to suffer the embarrassment this article of western apparel would have caused him. So, in his own Arab head-dress, he moved over from Scutari to the ship. Thus he left Chumlijah for the last time. How he had loved this kiosk and the scenes it overlooked! He had delighted in the garden and the trees, many of which he had planted and whose growth he had watched for twenty-five years.

It was with mingled feelings that I said good-bye to my home for the last time. Although I was glad to depart from the country, it was nevertheless a wrench to leave the home I had known for so many years. The boat was crowded and there had been carelessness over the question of our accommodation. Mohammed was angry, and the mistake was rectified. Of all my former so-called friends, only

Journey to Syria

five came on board to say farewell. I was more pained than surprised because I knew the fickle character of these people, but it seemed hard after having spent sixty years of my life in Stamboul. It was a cold, ungracious farewell after my service, but the instability of human nature is a fact one has to recognize. When we sailed, I could not bear to see the last of my beloved Stamboul, but I gazed towards the hills of Scutari and thought of my family at Chumlijah. I prayed also for the souls of my father and mother whose bodies were buried in a distant cemetery on the hill-side. I had been unable to visit their graves and say farewell because of my national dress. Everything is changed and, because of this change, what has the House of Mohammed not had to endure? May God have mercy on us!

The ship was most uncomfortable and so overcrowded that we had to have our meals in relays. Fortunately there was no sea, and the weather remained warm.

Two days after sailing, the Shereef began to feel unwell and, by the time the ship reached Beirut on the 9th March he was suffering badly and had a high temperature. But a special reception had been organized to greet him, so he had to endure the usual formalities when the launch brought him ashore.

There was a large crowd, but someone found me a chair where I sat in a comparatively clear space. Then a French official appeared. "You are welcome," he said, and opened the door of a reception room where Abdul Mejid, my son, was waiting with M. Lépiessier, the representative of the High Commissioner. The Mufti and many other local notabilities were also present to receive me, and a guard and band were paraded in my honour. I wanted the reception over as quickly as possible, and hurried to a car which drove me to my son's house. I greeted my daughter-in-law, and then asked for Dr. Mudewar, who had been officially attached to me when I was in the Lebanon. He lost no time in coming and immediately ordered me to bed, where I was not allowed to receive any visitors.

In spite of his illness, this official reception was most gratifying to the Shereef. He often spoke with appreciation of the readiness of the French authorities to receive him; of their courtesy and recognition of his position as a former Emir of Mecca. He was confined to bed for fifteen days after which a further period was needed for his recuperation. The French

A Prince of Arabia

authorities placed a car at his disposal and, as he began to recover, the Shereef was able to take drives and benefit from the air of Beirut which had always suited him.

As soon as he was convalescent, he wrote a letter to Ibn Saoud announcing his intention to visit the Hedjaz in order to offer, in person, his congratulations and blessings. He added that he would announce the probable date of his arrival when he reached Egypt.

When Ali Haider had recovered from his illness he held frequent conversations with the French authorities in Syria.

On the 2nd April I had an interview with M. de Jouvenel, the High Commissioner. He was most kind, showing me considerable attention on every occasion. I expressed through him my appreciation to France for the consideration with which I had been treated and the manner in which I had been received and saluted by her troops. At this interview I talked also with the Secretary General, M. Déréfe, and, on my departure, full military honours were paid to me.

As I got stronger, I returned two or three visits every day, and went for drives to different beauty spots in the surrounding country. Gradually my weakness passed away, the kindness and consideration I received everywhere giving me both strength and encouragement. Old acquaintances came to call and were delighted to meet me again. The representative of Ibn Saoud, Sheikh Suleiman Mousheikih, called and I returned his visit. I found him to be a good and sincere man. I was delighted to hear that my old Arab Secretary, Taib Hezaze, had become Private Secretary to Ibn Saoud.

I received letters from Stamboul to say that my family were well and, from America, I heard that Mohiddin was prospering.

On the 9th April I received word that the High Commissioner was coming to call upon me. On arrival, he told me that Ibn Saoud was making a treaty with Great Britain. I was aware that a commission * had gone to the Hedjaz, but with what object I did not know. The High Commissioner talked about the way in which the Turks were now speaking against the Prophet. "Yes," I said. "They have driven the family of Mohammed from Stamboul. Everywhere there is change and, though they have altered their form of dress, they have not effected the necessary change in their hearts."

On the following day I dined with the High Commissioner and sat

* This was the Commission headed by Brigadier General Sir Gilbert Clayton to come to an understanding over the question of the frontier between the Hedjaz and Transjordan, and matters relating to the Hedjaz railway.

Journey to Syria

beside him at table. "Are you taking your eldest son with you to the Hedjaz?" he enquired. "If you desire me to do so, I will take him," I replied.

"I would prefer him to remain in Beirut," he said, "but the decision lies with you."

"As it is your wish, he will remain," I said. There were many who wanted Abdul Mejid out of the way because there had been much talk of his candidature as the first President of the Syrian Republic, and there were others who also aspired to this office. I was pleased at what the High Commissioner had said. After dinner we had a long conversation during which M. de Jouvenel asked me to find out all I could, during my visit to the Hedjaz, about any understanding that existed between Ibn Saoud and Great Britain. I said I understood that, when the Wahhabis attacked, Ibn Saoud knew that the British Government would not intervene in support of Hussein. We then spoke of the Imam of Yemen, and I agreed that he was decidedly pro-Turk because many Turks—some of considerable influence in the country—had been left there on conclusion of hostilities. "But the Imam is wise," I added. "He is strong and an important factor to be considered. The Turks left a large amount of ammunition in his hands, his coast is extensive, and he can receive help from more than one quarter. The Italians are very active in that region."

We talked further and I then begged leave to retire.

The Shereef continued to receive great attention from all quarters, constant streams of visitors waiting on him throughout the day. For the Bairam Festival he attended the Grand Mosque where he was escorted to his carriage by the Mufti and received the acclamations of a large crowd. On that day he records entertaining a hundred visitors at his house. Newspaper reporters of all nationalities sought interviews, and he maintained close touch with the High Commissioner.

On the 17th April I received a surprise visit from the principal A.D.C. of M. de Jouvenel who introduced me to Sir Ronald Storrs, Governor of Jerusalem. I found Sir Ronald very courteous. He told me that the High Commissioner had informed him of my presence in Beirut, so he had come in person to extend me an invitation to spend a few days in Jerusalem. "If my health permits, nothing would give me greater pleasure," I declared, as I had always wanted to see this Holy City.

He enquired if Ibn Saoud had invited me to go to the Hedjaz.

A Prince of Arabia

"No," I said, "but he has proclaimed that any one belonging to that country can return. I am a Hejazi and, because I could no longer live at ease in Stamboul, I decided to avail myself of this opportunity. But I have been ill, with the result that my return to the Hedjaz has been delayed. Inshallah, in a few days I will continue my journey."

He was very friendly and said that he hoped I would let him know if there was any service he could render. I thanked him and we parted on the best of terms. He was a strange, high-spirited Englishman.

A few days later I called on M. de Jouvenel and thanked him for his advice to make my position and aims clear to the British. I told him that Sir Ronald Storrs had invited me to Jerusalem and that I had accepted his invitation. He was glad, and expressed pleasure, also, over my decision to leave Abdul Mejid in Beirut.

I had accepted an invitation from the representative of Ibn Saoud to take tea with him at 6 p.m. on the following day. He was giving a special farewell reception in my honour, the High Commissioner being present with his staff; the Mufti, the Cadi and many other notabilities. As usual M. de Jouvenel paid me much attention and said how he hoped that friendly relations would always be maintained between Ibn Saoud and the French Government. During the reception a letter was received by Ibn Saoud's representative from his master in which he sent me his salaams and enquired after my health which he hoped was better.

During his last days in Beirut the Shereef received scores of people and called on many more. He had an interview, among others, with Dr. Weizmann, the Zionist leader, but unfortunately there is no record of what took place. On the 27th April, Damad Achmed Namie Bey was appointed temporary President of the Syrian Republic, but the Shereef did not think that the conditions governing this appointment would be very popular. On the 1st May 1926 he called on the High Commissioner to say farewell.

M. de Jouvenel was not at home, but I saw M. Dérefe who was most polite. Through an interpreter, I expressed to him my feelings of gratitude towards France, and I thanked him for all the kindness that had been extended towards me. At 3 o'clock that afternoon, the High Commissioner himself came to the *konak* where I was staying in order to say good-bye, regretting that he should have been absent

Journey to Syria

when I called. I was informed that, at the frontier, a detachment of troops would be assembled to give me an official salute.

Mohammed and I left Beirut at 7.30 a.m. on the 2nd May being accompanied, as far as Sidon, by my daughter and Abdul Mejid with his wife. We were met at Sidon by a large number of people who tried to prevail on me to remain for the three days of an Arab visit. But that was impossible, so I said farewell to my other children and continued the journey with Mohammed. We reached Jerusalem in the evening, where I heard that Sir Ronald Storrs would receive me at 9.30 the next morning.

Sir Ronald was very affable and I expressed a hope that the British authorities would afford me assistance by showing at least a semi-official recognition of my position and desire to return to the Hedjaz. "I must consult Egypt," he said, "as it is from there that our policy is directed." He added that if I wished to see Lord Plumer, who was then High Commissioner for Palestine, he would make the necessary arrangements. Naturally, I wanted to see the High Commissioner.

At noon the following day I was asked to call at Government House. We were shown into a room where we were kept waiting for a long time. At length, I said to an attendant that I had a special appointment with His Excellency and, therefore, could not understand the delay. After a further ten minutes, Colonel Simon, the Military Secretary, came into the room to say that Lord Plumer had other business and would be unable to see me. Colonel Simon spoke Arabic well and was an intelligent man, but he was very secretive, giving the impression that he was not well disposed towards me. He asked several questions and enquired about my relationship with the family of Hussein.

"Although Shereef Hussein," I replied, "had been the cause of my banishment from Mecca in the past, he was now an exile in Cyprus, and I, thank God, was more or less free to travel as I wished. In this world, no man should be swollen-headed. Once upon a time we were like brothers, and his sons as my sons. In spite of what he has since done, I still have feelings of affection for Hussein. It is true that his son, Feisal, forgot me when he became King of Iraq—even showing antipathy towards me—but that I can forget."

I rose to go. "Give my salaams to Lord Plumer," I said. I reflected that these men were the friends of Hussein and realized that they had been fed with lies about me. I waited till sunset for the return call of the High Commissioner but, though he was seen to pass the hotel, he never came, nor did he send a representative. I was pained, considering such discourteous treatment to be quite unneces-

A Prince of Arabia

sary. In Beirut, Sir Ronald Storrs had addressed me as 'Majesty' and 'Saidna,' inviting me to visit Jerusalem. I accepted his invitation, but find, on arrival, that I am virtually ignored. I left for Egypt early the following morning.

Without doubt this churlish treatment accorded to the Shereef in Jerusalem affected him deeply, and it is difficult to understand what prompted the authorities to behave as they did. It was certainly not in accordance with the decency associated with British administration that, after he had been invited by Sir Ronald Storrs, he should have been so ignored.

The Shereef was to encounter further unpleasantness in Egypt. In Cairo he first saw Neville Henderson and explained to him the reasons prompting his journey to the Hedjaz. He knew, he said, that Ibn Saoud expected him. He had sent him a letter from Beirut which he had heard had been delivered to him in person, and the King himself had sent his compliments through his representative in Syria. Neville Henderson enquired if he would like to see the High Commissioner, and a meeting was arranged. A full account of the interview which resulted was described by Mohammed Emin in a letter he wrote to his step-mother, Princess Fatma :

Father and I went to the Residency at the appointed time and, after a few minutes, were shown in to the High Commissioner—Lord Lloyd. He enquired about the situation in Turkey and expressed regret that she should have entered the Great War. After much useless talk about the Turks, he at length turned to the question of Arabia and asked what father thought of the situation in that country. Father replied that he was going to learn for himself and, until he had done so, he did not feel competent to express an opinion. He only said that if Ibn Saoud desired to be a permanent ruler he hoped that he would try and please the people by tempering his somewhat fanatical ideas. Lord Lloyd wanted to know if Ibn Saoud was really a powerful man. Father was inclined to think he was, and added that there were rumours to the effect that Ibn Saoud was either ruled by the Mullahs of Wahhabism, or that he acted first, subsequently making out that his actions were at the instigation of the religious leaders. The High Commissioner understood and said : " I wonder if he has taken on more than he can digest."

I then began on behalf of father and said : " My father is going

Journey to Syria

to the Hedjaz because it is his native land. Before this, it was not possible because Hussein was there; now Ibn Saoud has proclaimed that the country is open to any Mussulman. Father wrote and told him some time ago that his object in going to the Hedjaz was merely in order to return to his native country." I then added that I hoped the British authorities would raise no objection if father was appointed to the rulership of the Hedjaz by the Moslem Congress in Mecca.

"While Turkey is on such good terms with Russia," he said, "Britain would not care to see a Turkish representative in Mecca," and he hinted that father must therefore have Bolshevik sympathies. I protested warmly at this suggestion, and said that father now had no connection whatsoever with the Turkish authorities. When I told father what Lord Lloyd had said he was most upset. We then saw Neville Henderson, who is a pleasant man, and well aware of the true facts. Father told him how sorry he was to have heard what the High Commissioner had suggested, and hoped that he would explain the truth to him. Neville Henderson assured us that Lord Lloyd was not in possession of the facts concerning father, and that the Home Government certainly did not share these views.

Fancy accusing father of Bolshevism! Even his bitterest enemies have never accused him of this. I only wish I had known then that Ibn Saoud had been subsidized by the Russian Government, who were the first to acknowledge his rulership of the Hedjaz. Now they have sent an Ambassador to the Hedjaz, and a Soviet representative is attending the Moslem Conference in Mecca. All these things are permitted because they have power and punch behind them. Father has neither power nor punch, but he has honesty and straightforwardness. That is why he is being so slighted and callously treated. I wish we had never interviewed Lord Lloyd.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE END

ON THE 11TH MAY, full of hope and confidence in the future, the Shereef Ali Haider embarked in a Khedivial boat at Suez and set sail for Arabia. He had previously sent a telegram to Ibn Saoud to announce the date of his arrival. He intended to disembark at Jeddah, but his first port of call was Yenbo, farther to the north on the Hedjaz coast. Here a rude shock was to await him.

We arrived at Yenbo where the local governor came on board. He was Abdul Rahman ibn Saoud, and he enquired politely after my health. Then he handed me a telegram from the King, the contents of which caused me considerable surprise. It read as follows:

To His Highness Shereef Ali Haider.

We have received your telegram acquainting us of your arrival before we had an opportunity to come to an understanding with you. Quietness in the Hedjaz is essential at the present time, and we feel certain that your arrival would provoke incidents which would disturb you and mitigate against your comfort. We therefore find it would be more convenient if you did not land in the Hedjaz. Our object is to maintain peace which I know is also your interest.

[Signed] ABDUL AZIZ IBN SAOUD,

King of the Hedjaz and Sultan of Nejd.

"Very well," I answered, "if the boat stops at Port Sudan, I will leave there, or at any other convenient place of call."

A little later, Tasin, the Chief of Police came on board. He also enquired for my health, and said how much he regretted the decision of Ibn Saoud which forbade me to land. "I knew nothing about it," he said. "These things are done with much secrecy." He then suggested that I should send a telegram of protest. I knew that would be useless, and said so.

The ship reached Jeddah on the following day when a deputation consisting of the Chief of Police and two others came on board with a letter from Ibn Saoud confirming the

The End

telegram Ali Haider had received at Yenbo, and expressing surprise that he should have undertaken the visit without first obtaining the King's concurrence. The news of his arrival had provoked many disturbing rumours and Ibn Saoud, therefore, considered it was better both for Ali Haider and the country if he did not land in the Hedjaz. Finally, he said he was sending by the bearer of the letter the sum of £300 to cover the Shereef's expenses.

I thought of the words in the Holy Koran : " To God I complain, and to Him I leave my destiny. God is the helper of His worshippers. There is no force nor power except from God who is Almighty."

For a few moments I said nothing. Then : " I did write a letter from Beirut, and I know that it was delivered. It is the will of God." I was handed the money from the King which I threw on to a chair. " My object," I added, " was to be of service to Ibn Saoud. Does he not want my help?" Those who heard me laughed. " I have patience," I continued, " and we must wait on the will of God."

At 5 p.m. we sailed.

The British Consul, Mr. S. R. Jordan, to whom Mohammed Emin had a letter of introduction, came on board and expressed surprise that the Shereef was not allowed to land because, he said, the people were so glad to hear of his arrival that they had prepared a great welcome for him. This was, indeed, the case. Members of various tribes numbering several thousand had marched into Mecca and Jeddah where there was much rejoicing that, at long last, the head of all Shereefs was returning to his country. *Abou Hair*, the large property belonging to Ali Haider near the water-front, had been thrown open, a feast prepared and the place thronged with eager guests.

It is therefore likely that Ibn Saoud was apprehensive as to the effect on his own interests of a big reception for Ali Haider, which he feared would weaken the position he had now decided to maintain. It is true that throughout his campaign against the family of Hussein, Ibn Saoud had received at least the moral support and encouragement of the Caliphate Committee, who never dreamt that he would take over the kingship of the Hedjaz nor appoint his son as Emir of Mecca. In

A Prince of Arabia

fact, the help which he had received from these sources was given on the understanding that he would not deprive the hereditary Shereefian family of the guardianship of the Holy Places.

At the Moslem Conference which took place in Mecca towards the end of 1926, Ibn Saoud was accused by some of those present, including Mohammed Ali of the Indian Caliphate Committee, of breaking his promise to the Islamic world by proclaiming himself King of the Hedjaz without their consent. They alleged that he had promised the Indian Caliphate Committee that he would leave the future rulership of the Hedjaz to the decision of a representative Moslem Conference and, in return for this promise, Indian Moslems had provided financial and moral assistance in his war against Hussein. According to an observer at the Conference, Ibn Saoud first showed discomfiture and tried to side-track the accusation with pleasant words and flattery. His interrogators persisted and at length he rose to say: "I have taken the Hedjaz with my sword. I therefore consider I have a right to anything I want." Mohammed Ali replied: "One day, then, you will be forced to leave the Hedjaz by the sword!"

Among members of the Conference in Mecca there were many who openly expressed a desire for the Shereef Ali Haider to be nominated to the Emirate. In the light of these facts it is quite clear why Ali Haider was not allowed to land in the Hedjaz, and it was natural that the return of an Emir of his importance should cause excitement among the tribes. But it did seem cruel to Ali Haider who had no desire to make trouble and only wished to visit the home of his ancestors and the birthplace of his Prophet. He had set out from Beirut with his heart full of hope and encouraged, not only by the proclamations of Ibn Saoud, but also by his accredited representative in Syria. In the procedure he had adopted the Shereef had been scrupulously correct. The letter he had sent to Ibn Saoud from Beirut had undoubtedly been received for, on return to Syria, the Shereef obtained the official registration receipt signed by the King's own hand.

In a few trenchant phrases only, the Shereef expresses his bitter disappointment.

The End

As I left my country my feelings were very bitter. I did not expect to receive such a shock at my time of life. With all my heart and faith I was merely returning to my country to make a pilgrimage—a child of this country, a Mussulman and a son of those who for hundreds of years had held the Emirate. For me, an Emir, to be forbidden in this manner is tragic.

The steamer sailed for Port Sudan, where the Shereef and Mohammed had to wait two or three days before they could book a passage back to Syria. During this time he met Colonel Balfour, the Governor of the Red Sea Province, who impressed the Shereef with his politeness and consideration. On the 19th May he sailed for Suez.

The boat was crowded with English people going home from Burma. Every one was gay, and both children and adults were happy together. I alone was sad. The passengers had heard my news and showed understanding. "How and why did it happen?" they asked. "It is a passing trouble," I would reply. "God is great."

On the 27th May, the Shereef returned to Beirut where he was met by his son and received many sympathetic visitors. But he lost no time in writing a dignified letter to Ibn Saoud explaining that his visit had been prompted by his own public announcement that the Hedjaz was now free and by the Shereef's natural desire to take advantage of it. He stated, furthermore, that he had not moved from Beirut until he had asked permission. In bowing to the commands of the King he did not doubt his sincerity, but realized that it was the will of God which could not be altered. He did suggest, however, that Ibn Saoud's order must have been inspired by evil and mischievous people who had spread lies about Ali Haider.

The unexpected return of Ali Haider to Beirut caused much surprise both to the French authorities and to the general population. Much idle gossip was associated with his abortive attempt to land in the Hedjaz, and it was even suggested that his interviews with the British authorities had caused Ibn Saoud to be apprehensive. Many influences, however, must have been at work to deliver this final blow to the aspirations of the Shereef.

It was soon quite clear that Ibn Saoud had no intention of

A Prince of Arabia

ever allowing Ali Haider to return to the Hedjaz—a fact which the Shereef was forced to recognize. Much of the Shereef's property in Mecca had been occupied by Ibn Saoud, for which he received an inadequate rent that diminished as time went by and finally ceased altogether. This was now his sole source of income, and he therefore had to adapt himself and his family—who joined him in 1927—to a humble existence.

With the disappointment caused by the fading prospect of his ever being allowed to return to his own country, the Shereef began to lose active interest in contemporary politics. So, when, in 1927, his name again came to the fore as a prospective ruler of Syria, he showed little enthusiasm. Syrian politics had become very complicated, and it appeared as though the French were unable to make up their minds as to what form the future government of the country should take. They had been faced by one revolt after another against their authority, and it was generally conceded that the republican system of government—introduced in 1919—had proved a failure. Early in November 1926 the High Commissioner authorized the publication of a report stating that the sole remedy for the ills with which the country was afflicted lay in the adoption of the monarchical system of government as being alone compatible with the psychology of the Moslems and the character of the Arabs. It was further affirmed that an essential condition to the restoration of prosperity lay in the appointment of some universally revered descendant of the Prophet for which the Shereef Ali Haider was proposed as the most suitable candidate.

For the next four or five years this question of the future government of Syria kept recurring; nothing was decided and the uncertainty did not tend to stabilize the condition of the country. Each time the question was raised the name of Ali Haider was put forward, and it was even reported that Turkey tried to influence the French Government in his favour by more than one representation to the Quai d'Orsay. In December 1927, Ali Haider was offered the Presidency of a Syrian Republic—if that was finally decided—but this he definitely declined. Since the Shereef was old and in failing health, the candidature of his son, Abdul Mejid, was suggested

The End

—a proposition of which Ali Haider quite approved—but nothing was ever to come of it. It was not until 1932 that the French finally decided to maintain a republican regime with certain modifications. This decision was doubtless influenced by the fact that the large Christian community in Syria had no desire for a Moslem to be appointed as their King, and the French therefore considered that a President would be better able to hold the balance between the different factions who never ceased to intrigue.

The Shereef Ali Haider kept himself aloof from the political turmoil which raged about him, and was more concerned with the health, the comings and the goings of members of his family and other purely domestic matters than he was with the rulership of Syria. He was very interested in young Arab students who used to visit him—friends of his children—and enjoyed their talk of sport and their discussions on more serious subjects. They, in their turn, never failed to be impressed by his presence and liberal views. But his own friends deserted him as his material prospects diminished, and he wistfully records how, on Bairam 1930, the only visitor to come and offer congratulations was a Christian.

On the 21st November 1930, the papers reported the sudden death of Shereef Hussein in Cyprus.

This is the world—at the end Death. I regret his passing. I did him no harm, but he harmed me. In the Calendar of Mecca he is 79. Mohammed wrote letters of condolence, on my behalf, to the sons of Shereef Hussein.

2nd December. King Ali has replied to Mohammed that his father is not dead, but very ill. He is being brought to Transjordan where it is hoped he will recover. Ali expressed appreciation at receiving a letter from Mohammed who, I suppose, must now write another of congratulations on the report being unfounded.

A few days later the old King arrived at Haifa; thence he was driven to Amman where he stayed with the Emir Abdullah. He was very weak and it was obvious that his days were numbered; so it came as no surprise when he finally succumbed on the 5th June 1931. With the death of

A Prince of Arabia

Hussein a gradual reconciliation between his sons and the family of Ali Haider began, correspondence was friendly, visits were interchanged and a betrothal was actually announced between Shereef Tellul, the eldest son of Abdullah, and Sfyneh, a daughter of Ali Haider. Sfyneh asked her father to state that her acceptance of Tellul depended on the following conditions being granted: first, that she should live in a separate house from the remainder of the family; second, that Tellul should take no other wife so long as she remained married to him; and lastly, that she should be allowed to appear in public with her face uncovered. Of the three conditions the Emir Abdullah accepted the first two without demur, but he not think his people sufficiently educated for him to permit his prospective daughter-in-law to go out of doors with her face unveiled. This was eventually conceded and the marriage was arranged to take place on conclusion of a European tour Abdullah undertook in the summer of 1934. During his absence, however, young Tellul, with the encouragement of his mother and uncle, went through a form of marriage with his first cousin. When Abdullah returned he was faced with a domestic situation which caused him no little annoyance, and accounts for the following extract in the diary of Ali Haider:

Such a strange thing has taken place! The Emir Abdullah wants Sfyneh to take his second son, Naif, as husband instead of Tellul. I cannot understand the reason, for he had only written to me recently saying: "I have announced in London the engagement of Tellul to your daughter, Sfyneh. I therefore beg of you not to do anything to break it off and thereby cause me shame."

A few days later, the Shereef heard the reason for the desired change, and his daughter, Sfyneh, was so indignant that she refused to accept. The relationship, however, between the two families remained cordial.

There is little more of interest to record. During the last year of his life the Shereef moved to a house overlooking the sea near Ras Beirut, from the balcony of which he had an uninterrupted view of the Mediterranean. There he would sit for hours watching the movements of ships, for he always had



The last days of the Emir. Ali Haider, Beirut, 1934

a real affection for anything related to the sea. To the last he maintained his admiration for and interest in the British Navy, and was considerably disturbed by the unfortunate collision between the *Hood* and *Renown* in the early part of 1935 and the Courts Martial proceedings which followed. In his last letter he wrote: "In my opinion the Admiral was at fault: he left his Captains in doubt."

For months at a time the Shereef would be afflicted with violent attacks of bronchitis; he would then partially recover to enjoy again the company of his family and an occasional game of chess with a friend. Each attack left him weaker, but the end, when it came, was unexpected. The final entries in his diary deal with his state of health.

22nd March 1935. I felt very miserable. Last night I could not sleep and only breathed with the utmost difficulty. I sent for the doctor who gave me an injection. I hope God will give me strength as I feel very weak.

23rd March. I was awake again all night, and I am weaker than ever. May God be my helper! My son, Mohammed, sat with me all night.

On the following day at 8 a.m. the Shereef Ali Haider breathed his last. When the Princess Fatma, who had scarcely ever left his side during his declining years, brought him his breakfast, he declined and asked only for a cup of tea. As he appeared to be weaker than usual she added a teaspoonful of brandy, Musbah, her daughter, remarking that the quantity was insufficient. "Child," smiled the Shereef, "at my age do you wish me to take to drink?"

Then I got a shock—writes the Princess Fatma—as he suddenly appeared to collapse. I hurried downstairs and rushed to the lower flat which two young French military doctors had recently rented. I accosted one. "Let me put my clothes on," he said. "Never mind about that," I replied, "come in your pyjamas." "*Toute de suite*," he cried, and up we both raced. His three daughters were standing by my husband and, as I put my arm round him, his head fell on to my shoulder. The doctor undid his dressing gown to feel his heart. "It is over," he said. A few minutes before, the Emir had breathed to the children: *Allah Kerim*—"God is Merciful"—and then ex-

A Prince of Arabia

pired. The French doctor gently closed his eyes and carried him to his bedroom. He looked asleep—at rest.

So passed a noble spirit, largely unrecognized yet ennobled by disappointment. His constant solicitation for others, and the limits to which he went in order to avoid giving unnecessary pain, even to his enemies, were characteristics of which his contemporaries took advantage. Many interpreted his spirit of self-sacrifice as a sign of weakness—an interpretation invariably given to the high-principled.

In reality, his character was anything but weak, a true appreciation of the attitude he adopted during the first World War bearing out this contention very forcibly. He could have associated himself with the Arab Revolt, for which he would have obtained no mean material reward. His foresight was sufficiently keen in 1917 for him to be fully alive to the outcome of the military campaign in the Near East, but he refused to join a movement which was encouraged and led by countries whose aim he believed to be the incorporation of portions of Arabia into their own Empires for purposes of security. At least, he was convinced that any co-operation with the Allied Powers would of necessity impose obligations on the Arabs which he thought would be difficult to redeem on the termination of hostilities. In spite of the defeat he saw in store for the Turks, he believed, at that time, that the Arabs could best achieve their aims as a part of the Ottoman Empire. Time and again he was approached by Arab Nationalists to throw his weight and influence on the side of the Revolt, but—though sympathetic with the British and hostile towards the Germans—he maintained his contention throughout the war. His proud spirit rebelled at the idea of being under obligations to foreigners whose policy he could not expect to be purely altruistic. It required a strong man to hold fast to these principles under the circumstances then prevailing.

The Shereef Ali Haider had a great belief in the will of God. Any reverse he suffered was a part of the Divine Plan. An inclination, therefore, to criticize the Shereef for at times appearing to do little to help himself must be countered by an appreciation of his Faith and that part of Moslem philosophy

The End

which enjoins a belief in the doctrine of Pre-destination.

He was a great advocate of unity—not only among Arabs, but also among all Moslem communities, whatever their denomination. He believed that the cultural power of a united Islam in co-operation with the Christian Churches could exert a preponderant influence on world stability. The first World War, however, tended to weaken brotherhood among Moslems, much to the chagrin of the Shereef. This weakening of the ties binding together the world of Islam caused Moslem potentates, who were in a position to do so, to neglect their more unfortunate co-religionists and, in particular, the direct descendants of the Prophet. From no Moslem Prince did Ali Haider receive the helping hand enjoined by his religion; no Indian Rajah sought to alleviate his financial needs or those of his immediate family; the Khedive of Egypt who had enormous *Wakf* funds at his disposal did nothing for Ali Haider, and the Agha Khan ignored any appeal that was made to him.

The cynic may say that Ali Haider reaped the inevitable reward for absolute honesty and absolute integrity, but the reward for these virtues is independent of this world and more enduring than any gifts of man. May God rest his Soul!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

The House of the Prophet Mohammed

MOHAMMED—THE PROPHET

Fatima—Ali, 4th Caliph

Hassan, 5th Caliph
(Shereefs)
Hassan-el-Mussema

Hussein
(Seyeds)

Abdullah (Yemen tree)
Moussa
Mohammed-el-Alaoui

Abdullah

Hussein

Ali

Suleiman

Hussein

Essa

Abdul Kerim

Moutsan

Idriss

Katada, Emir of Mecca 1174 A.D.

Ali

Hussein

Abu Numay

Roumeyeh

Ajlan

Hassan

Berekat

Mohammed

Berekat 1517 A.D.

Abu Numay

Hassan

Muhsin [DEVI-ZEYD]

Zeyd

Saad

Said

Musaad

See details of House of DEVI-ZEYD on separate page

Abdullah . . . Emir of Mecca (DEVI-AOUN)
Hussein (Abdullah succeeded Muhsin for a short period until Zeyd became of age)
Abdullah
Muhsin

Muhsin

Aoun

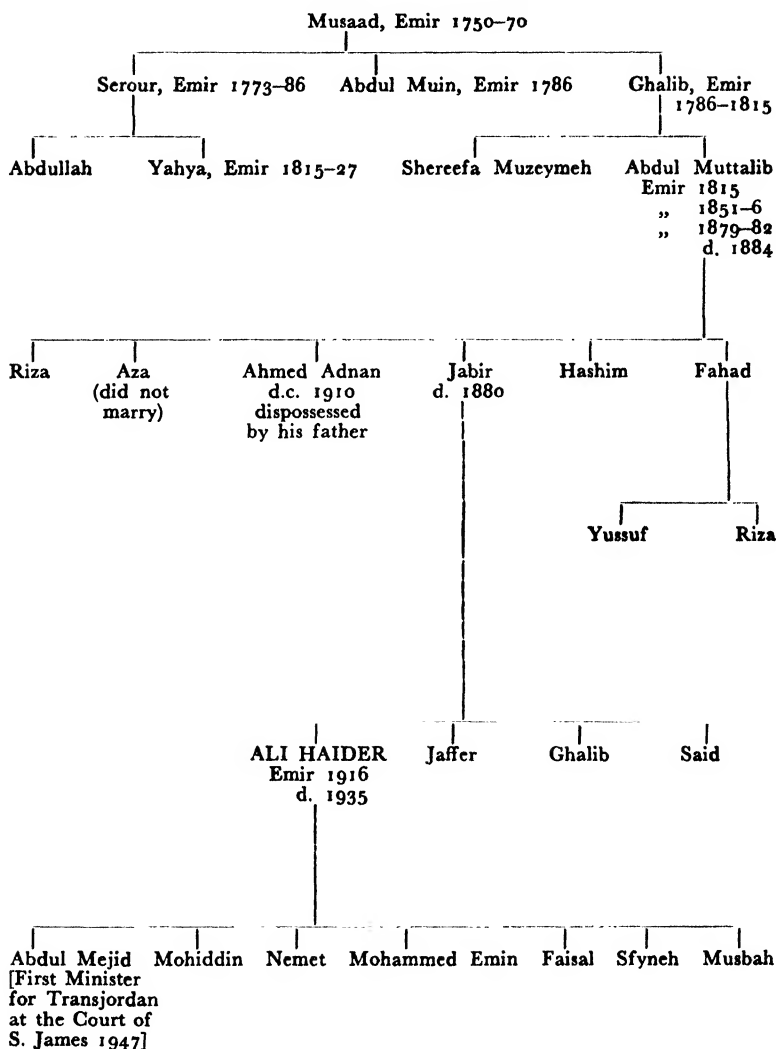
Abdul Mouin

See details of House of DEVI-AOUN on separate page

Mohammed ibn Aoun
Emir of Mecca

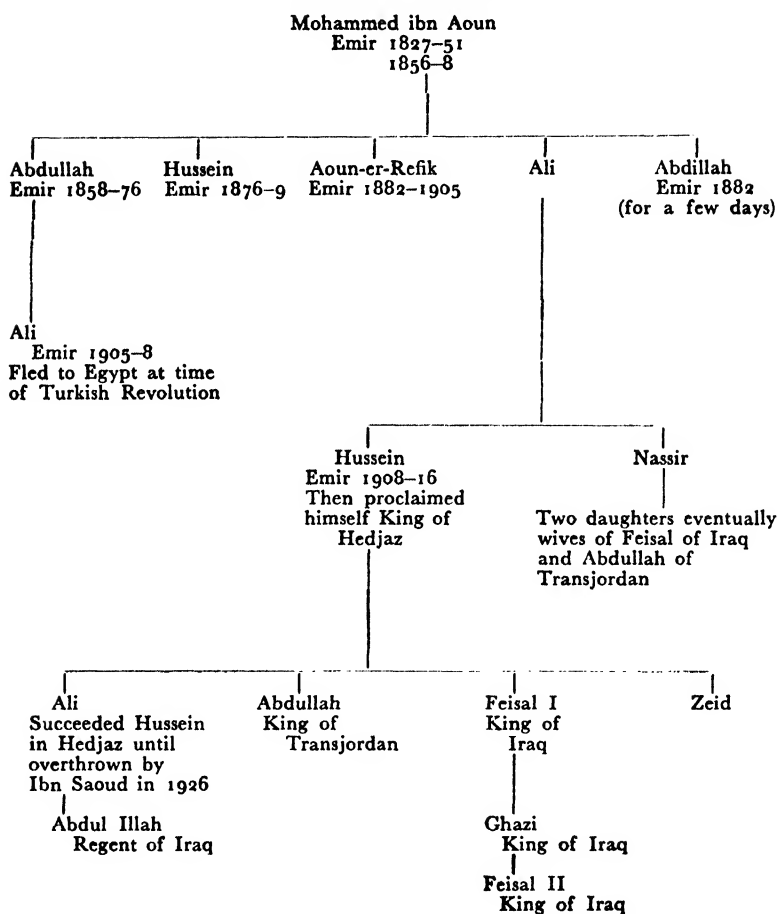
APPENDIX 2

The House of Devi-Zeyd



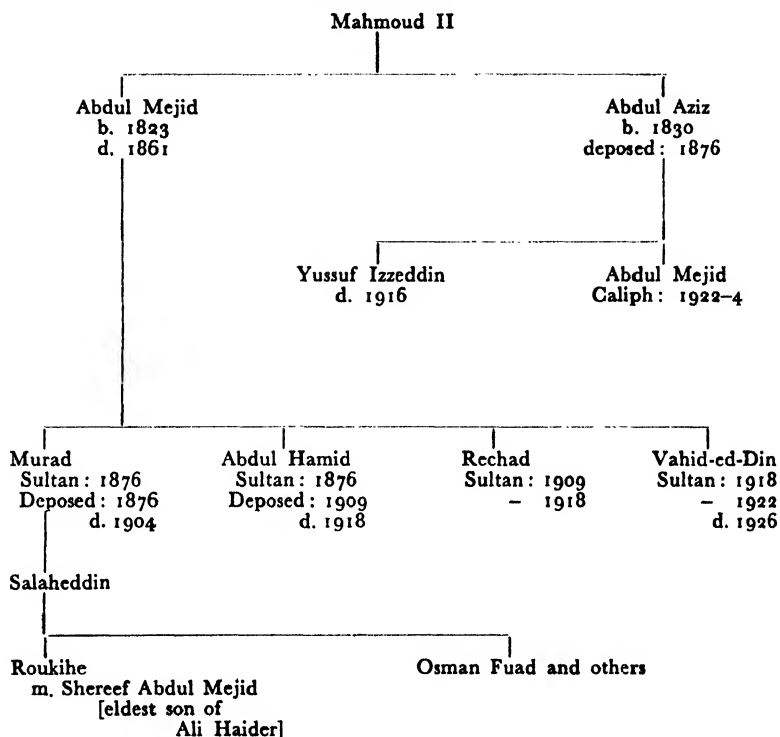
APPENDIX 3

The House of Devi-Aoun



APPENDIX 4

Contemporary Sultans of the House of Osman



*The Recommendation of the Shereef Ali Haider
to the Moslem World by the Caliph Abdul Mejid*
—1923

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficient, the Merciful! All praise to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! May the Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon our Lord Prophet, Mohammed, and on his family and followers!

At a time when all Muslims should have worked together in unity, Shereef Hussein of the Hedjaz shocked the Islamic World by his rebellion and oppression. The late Caliph, Mohammed Reched Khan, thereupon charged the Emir Shereef Ali Haider with the Emirate of Holy Mecca which was rightly his inheritance. Thus, one result of the rebellion of Shereef Hussein was to return the Emirate to the *Dar el Caliph*.

We (the Caliph Abdul Mejid and the Emir Shereef Ali Haider) have known each other since childhood. For many years we were together in the same classes, receiving the same education from the same professors. During forty years this mutual relationship, which began in childhood, has ripened into a sincere reciprocal affection. I know him very well, very closely and very intimately. A noble descendant of an illustrious family, he has inherited all the characteristics and great moral qualities of his ancestors.

During the past fifty years heavy trials and tribulations have affected the world of Islam in general and the House of the Caliph in particular. Many followed their own personal ambitions and, with the weakening of their faith, grew to think only of themselves. Nevertheless, the Emir Ali Haider had only one consideration—to fulfil faithfully the great religious and patriotic duty imposed on him. This aim dominated both his political and private life, and he never ceased to work with enthusiasm for the unity of Islam, the progress and uplift of all Muslimen. For him no sacrifice was too much if it strengthened his religion and the Caliphate. Faced by the dangers threatening the Home of Islam he sacrificed everything, disregarding entirely his position, his prospects and his personal possessions. Thus, he proved himself by his deeds to be a

Appendix

noble member of the illustrious family to which he belongs.

I am therefore glad to present him to the world of Islam, feeling quite confident that the 300,000,000 Moslem brethren whose hearts are devoted to their Prophet will lose no opportunity of manifesting their sincere attachment and respect to this most noble son of the House of Mohammed.

May peace be on us and on all pious servants of God!

Signed : ABDUL MEJID

Caliph

BIBLIOGRAPHY

<i>Arabia</i>	H. S. J. B. Philby
<i>Travels in Arabia</i>	J. L. Burkhardt
<i>Pilgrimage to Al Medina and Mecca</i>	Richard Burton
<i>La Puissance devant la revolte Arabe</i>	Eugene Jung
<i>Arabia Deserta</i>	C. M. Doughty
<i>Abdul Hamid</i>	Edwin Pears
<i>Memories of a Turkish Statesman</i>	Djemal Pasha
<i>The Making of Modern Turkey</i>	Harry Luke
<i>The Turkish Empire</i>	Eversley and Chirol
<i>The Near East from within</i>	Anon.
<i>Seven Pillars of Wisdom</i>	T. E. Lawrence
<i>The Caliphate</i>	T. W. Arnold
<i>The World Crisis—the Aftermath</i>	Winston Churchill
<i>Arabesque</i>	Princess Musbah Haider

